Transition

Transition planning is a process to help students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) decide what they want to do after high school. It also helps them figure out how to get there. This may include successful participation in Postsecondary Education, Employment, and Independent Living activities. The purpose is to help teens prepare to be independent young adults.

IEP transition planning is more than just a hopeful exercise or brainstorming session. During planning, teens work on specific goals based on interest inventories. Students are encouraged to take a leading role in IEP transition. In fact, the IEP team must invite a student to meetings where transition planning is discussed. They do activities to help achieve these goals. Interest inventories are completed yearly in each of the specified areas as student interest may change.

These areas are often referred to as "Post School Goals" and are the driving force behind IEPs written for students' ages 14 to 21 yr. old.

The Southern Fulton School District provides a variety of services and activities to assist the student in exploring, planning, preparing and achieving their post high school goals. Services and activities can include but are not limited to:

•Career Interest Activities such as formal interest/ability inventories and surveys

•Career Exploration Activities such as job shadowing

•Information on post-secondary education options such as attending College and Career Fairs along with accessing financial aide.

•Information and assistance in linking students with agencies and programs such as Office of Vocation Rehabilitation (OVR).

•Learning Style Inventories

•Tours of post-secondary facilities such as Allegany College of MD, Shippensburg University, Mt. Aloysius University, Wilson University and Hiram G. Andrews.

•Transition Work Experience: Paid, Community Based Vocational Training or Volunteer

•Trainings on transition topics for both students and parents/guardian

•Transition Work Experience: Paid, Community Based Vocational Training or Volunteer

Effective Transition planning is a partnership between the student, parents or guardians, teachers, and administrators.

The Southern Fulton District strives to help the student and parent, or guardian look at the student as they are today, imagine what they would want to do after graduation then provides services and activities to achieve those dreams of tomorrow.

Information on and the definition of transition services and topics in this website were provided from information accessed from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, PaTTan and the Pennsylvania Secondary Transition Guide. For more transition information, go to www.secondarytransition.org.

https://www.understood.org/articles/understanding-individualized-education-programs

Postsecondary Goals

The goals in the IEP transition plan state what a student wants to do or achieve after high school. Goals can be in four areas:

- Vocational training (e.g., learning a trade)
- Postsecondary education (e.g., college or other schooling)
- Jobs and employment
- Independent living, if needed

Just like annual IEP goals, transition goals must be written with a result in mind. They must also be measurable. In other words, you must be able to know if the goals have been accomplished. Transition goals must focus on what happens after high school.

Keep in mind that transition goals may change several times as a student's interests develop. It's not unusual for teens to explore different careers and paths. Transition goals are reviewed and updated every year, along with the rest of the IEP.

Goals may be more general for kids in middle school and when they're starting high school. They get more specific as students enter later grades.

For example, a transition goal for an eighth grader might be: After high school, I will work full time in a career working with cars. An example of a goal for a 10th grader might be: After graduating from high school, I will enroll at ABC College (an automotive technician school) and take classes to prepare me for a career as a mechanic.

9 ways your teen can learn a trade
https://www.understood.org/articles/9-ways-your-teen-can-learn-a-trade

Types of colleges and how they differ
https://www.understood.org/articles/types-of-colleges-and-how-they-differ

6 independent living skills kids need before moving away from home
https://www.understood.org/articles/6-independent-living-skills-kids-need-before-moving-away-from-home

Transition Services

Once transition goals are set, the IEP team will decide what services a student needs to meet goals. The range of possible services is broad:

- Instruction (including special education)
- Related services
- Community experiences, like volunteer work
- Career and college counseling
- Help with daily living skills, if needed

These services must be reviewed and updated each year to support a student's transition goals. Just like goals, services may change over time to reflect a student's interests. The IEP team might list accommodations, too.

The team can also use IEP goals to support the transition plan. For example, a student who wants to attend auto mechanic school may first need to learn specific math skills. So, the team may need to set IEP goals and provide school services related to math.

Some transition services can take place at school. But often, transition services occur at home or in the community, like at local youth employment programs and vocational rehab centers. During transition planning, the IEP team may invite people from the community, like counselors and job specialists, to help.

Activities that help support IEP transition planning

Along with goals and services, nearly all IEP transition plans have activities for the student to do. The idea is to prepare teens for adulthood.

Transition goals related to independent living may involve having teens take on more responsibility. For example, teens might:

- Open a bank account and learn to manage money.
- Shop for groceries and plan and prepare meals.
- Be responsible for maintaining a car and buying auto insurance.
- Use public transportation.
- Schedule their own appointments with a health care provider and choose health insurance.
- Set up and use a calendar for school, work, personal appointments, and leisure time.
- Similarly, a student may explore college, career, and job options. Here are examples of student activities:

- Research and visit local colleges and training schools they're interested in attending.
- Meet with other students who have gone on to college or career.
- Tour a workplace or shadow a mentor or role model at work.
- Network with friends and relatives about their careers.
- Go on informational interviews.
- Explore local internships and apprenticeships.

How to help teens and young adults with the job hunting process
https://www.understood.org/articles/how-to-help-your-young-adult-child-with-the-job-hunting-process

How to help your child get an apprenticeship
https://www.understood.org/articles/how-to-help-your-child-get-an-apprenticeship

How IEP transition planning ends

As a student gets older, the IEP team gets ready for the change to adulthood. At least a year before a teen turns the age of majority — 18 in most states — the team must start preparing for the transfer of IEP rights.

When students graduate from or leave high school, they also get what's called a summary of performance. This document lists academic and functional skills. It also offers recommendations for achieving postsecondary goals and contact information.

Once the IEP ends, so does transition planning. But if transition planning is done well, the young person should be prepared to take the next steps in adulthood.

Tips for students

If you're a student with an IEP, you can look forward to the school inviting you to be part of transition planning team. It can help you plan for your future.

One thing you can do is start to think about what you'd like to do after high school. Get ideas:

- See a list of example careers for people who learn and think differently.

It's OK if you don't know exactly what you want to do. Or if you feel anxious about the future. These feelings are common. You can ask the IEP team to include services or activities to help you find your strengths and interests. This might mean trying out different things.

Tips for families and educators

As you help a student plan for IEP transition, you'll run into two big questions.

First, when is a good time to start? Although services must start by age 14, planning often starts earlier. Some IEP teams begin working with students as early as middle school to help them explore their interests and possible careers. It often depends on the child's needs and maturity.

Second, what role should the student have in IEP transition meetings? In general, students should attend and take a leading role. After all, they're the ones preparing for adult life. At the same time, not every child has the skills or maturity to play a leading role in IEP meetings.

For more help with IEP transition planning, visit the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition. The center is funded by the U.S. Department of Education.

40+ career examples of people who learn and think differently
https://www.understood.org/articles/40-career-examples-of-people-who-learn-and-think-differently

Pros and Cons of my child attending an IEP meeting
https://www.understood.org/articles/should-i-encourage-my-child-to-go-to-iep-meetings

National Technical Assistance Center on Transition: The Collaborative (NTACT:C)
https://transitionta.org/