

Guidelines for Transition: Basic Stuff to Know!

- In New Jersey, transition planning must begin by the beginning of the school year in which a student will be 14. The IEP must include a statement of the student's strengths, interests and preferences; identification of a course of study and related strategies/activities that are consistent with their strengths, interests and preferences, and are intended to help students develop or attain post-secondary goals related to training, education, employment, and independent living if appropriate.
- The student must be invited to any meeting in which transition will be discussed. The student may choose not to attend. . .
- The IEP for a student who is 14 must include a statement of the State and local graduation requirements that s/he is expected to meet. If the student is exempted from or there is a modification to local or state high school graduation requirements the IEP must include a rationale for the exemption or modification and a description of the alternate proficiencies to be achieved in order to qualify for a state endorsed diploma.
- The IEP for the school year during which the student turn 16 must include measurable post-secondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments; and appropriate transition services designed within a "results oriented" process to facilitate the student's movement from school to post-school activities including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, and community participation.
- At least three years prior to students reaching the age of majority (18) the IEP team must meet with students and provide information to them about reaching age of majority – their rights, etc. Students become the decision-makers upon reaching 18 regardless of ability unless parents pursue guardianship. Parents needing to seek guardianship should start this process at this time.
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) will provide consultation to a student at age 14. Two years prior to graduation contact should be made with DVRS to determine eligibility for services. A student who receives SSI or SSDI is automatically eligible for DVRS services. The Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) should be in place prior to a student's graduation from high school.
- The IEP team must also consider the need for consultation from other agencies (Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Division of Mental Health Services, etc.) beginning when the student turns 14, or younger if appropriate.
- Families who have children eligible for the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) can determine eligibility from birth. These families can choose to link with DDD before DVRS in terms of adult living support. These agencies have agreed to determine eligibility of a person independently of the other. For students with disabilities who are potentially eligible to receive services from DDD the district must

provide the necessary materials to the parent to apply for those services pursuant to the Uniform Application Act. DDD can put a student on a wait list for day programming five years prior to exiting the school if appropriate. Services from DDD typically do not begin until the student has turned 21 and aged out of public education.

- There should be a designated person responsible to serve as a liaison to postsecondary resources and make referrals to the resources as appropriate.
- Students should meet transition components of the IEP before graduation; a student who has enough credits to graduate has not automatically met his/her transition components.
- When a student graduates or ages out of school, the student must be provided with a written summary of his/her academic achievement and functional performance prior to the date of the student's graduation or exit. This summary must include recommendations to help the student in meeting post-secondary goals.