

Transition Policies and Procedures

Fort Sam Houston ISD

CD#015914

Legal Framework: Transition Services

What is Transition for a Student with Special Needs?

"Transition refers to a change in status from behaving primarily as a student to assuming emergent adult roles in the community. These roles include employment, participating in post-secondary training/education, maintaining a home, becoming appropriately involved in the community, and experiencing satisfactory personal and social relationships. The process of enhancing transition involves the participation and coordination of school programs, adult agency services and natural supports within the community.

The foundation for transition should be laid during the elementary and middle school years, guided by the broad concept of career development. Transition planning should begin no later than age 14, and students should be encouraged, to the full extent of their capabilities, to assume a maximum amount of responsibility for such planning." (Halpern, 1994)

Transition and Employment Guide

Ft. Sam Houston ISD, Member District (Military School Districts Cooperative) must:

- Post the [Texas Transition and Employment Guide](#) on the district's website.
- Provide a copy of the Texas Transitions and Employment Guide at
 - The ARD Committee meeting at which transition is discussed at age 13 or
 - The first ARD Committee meeting that occurs after the guide becomes available if the student's ARD Committee has already met previously to discuss transition.

What's Required

Federal Requirements:

Transition services and activities must be included in the development of the IEP no later than the first IEP to be in effect when the student turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and must include appropriate measurable post-secondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and where appropriate, independent living skills.

State Requirements: (note the main difference between Federal and state requirements is the age a full Transition Plan development is required)

Texas requirements for transition services are aligned to the federal requirements included in IDEA 2004. However, state law and guidance include additional requirements for the provision of transition services for students receiving special education services in Texas. A new state law passed in the summer of 2011 requires that "appropriate state transition planning must begin for a student not later than when the student reaches 14 years of age" (*SB 1788, 06/17/2011*). The Texas Administrative Code (TAC) describes the following nine issues important to the development of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) for students receiving special education services.

- Appropriate student involvement in the student's transition to life outside the public school system
- If the student is younger than 18 years of age, appropriate parental involvement in the student's transition
- If the student is at least 18 years of age, appropriate parental involvement in the student's transition, if the parent is invited to participate by the student or the school district in which the student is enrolled
- Any postsecondary education options
- A functional vocational evaluation
- Employment goals and objectives
- If the student is at least 18 years of age, the availability of age-appropriate instructional environments
- Independent living goals and objectives
- Appropriate circumstances for referring a student or the student's parents to a governmental agency for services

What We Do

- Transition services means working as a team with the student, parent, school staff and outside agencies or community service to develop a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability that is based on the individual student's needs, taking into account:
 - the student's strengths,
 - preferences,
 - interests,
 - which includes instruction,
 - related services,
 - community experience,
 - the development of employment and other post school adult living objectives, and
 - if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation.
- All of these activities will be considered for each student, however specific activities will be determined by the needs of each student.

- Transition is a results oriented process that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of a child with disabilities to facilitate the movement from school to post-school activities.
- These activities, through state guidelines, begins on or before the student turns 14 years old with postsecondary goals in education or training, employment and if appropriate, independent living skills based on age-appropriate transition assessments and, an examination of transition issues including the appropriate courses of study based on transition goals.
- The IEP will include transition services which are needed to assist the student in reaching those post secondary goals.
- The Case Manager is responsible for obtaining parent, teacher and student input forms for transition planning and two additional age appropriate Student Transition Assessments. The parent and student input forms are the Co-op Parent and Student Transition Surveys. They are filled out in a parent/student meeting, during a phone conversation with a parent or are sent home to be filled out by a parent and returned to the Case Manager prior to the ARD.
- Although transition planning must be in place by age 14, it can be completed earlier, depending on the needs of the student. We will begin this planning in 6th grade.
 - Earlier transition planning, when appropriate, can be considered for students with moderate to severe disabilities who may need additional services from outside agencies with long waiting lists.
- Appropriate student involvement in the student's transition to life outside the public school system includes student's participation in the ARD/IEP committee.
 - Best practices would indicate that to the extent possible, the student should lead a portion of the ARD/IEP meeting taking into consideration his or her capabilities.
- The student will be invited to the ARD/IEP Committee meeting when transition services will be discussed.
- The ARD/IEP Committee will make decisions regarding transition goals and services based on age-appropriate transition assessments.
 - The transition goals and services in the student's IEP will be updated annually.
- An ARD/IEP Committee will consider, and if appropriate, address the issue of a formal functional vocational evaluation.
 - A formal functional vocational evaluation is an assessment process that provides information about job or career interests, aptitudes, and skills. Information is gathered through situational assessments in the setting where the job is performed and takes ARD Committee input and parent permission.
 - The ARD/IEP Committee identifies students who will benefit from services in a vocational program such as Community Based Instruction (CBI). Community Based Vocational Instruction (CBVI) or Work Based Learning (WBL).
 - The informal or formal functional vocational evaluation can be a useful tool in assessing progress for these students. The informal functional vocational evaluation is an ongoing data collection process and is part of a student in special education services ongoing data collection process.
- Age-appropriate instructional environments will be available for students who are 18 years of age and older.

- The ARD/IEP committee must determine the appropriate environment for each student in this age category on a case-by-case basis, but decisions should be made by taking into consideration what typical students in general education are doing at that age (e.g. college, technical school, employment, volunteer positions, etc.) and the comparable environments available.
- Formal transition planning is completed during the ARD/IEP committee meeting and focuses on assisting students with disabilities to become independent within the community, to the greatest extent possible.
- For students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), IEP goals and objectives will address the skills necessary to function in current and future environments.
 - Transition (or futures) planning for students with ASD, at any age, includes ARD/IEP Committee determination of need, and establishment of a plan, if appropriate, to support the student's successful transition from current to next environment(s).
 - Such support might also include assisting students to transition from elementary to middle school level, from middle to high school, and/or across instructional settings.
- Prior to the student's 17th birthday the Notice of Transfer of Parental Rights must be completed. Refer to current the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** for more detailed information regarding this subject.
- Plan Addressing Needed Transition Services. (This is not the purpose of a Personal Graduation Plan)
- By age 17, inform student/parent of transfer of rights to student when students reach age 18 and complete the transfer of rights statement in the ARD/IEP Supplement: Personal Graduation Plan Addressing Needed Transition Services. (This is not the purpose of a Personal Graduation Plan) By age 18, provide student with a Now You Are 18 Booklet or app information.
- If a student's goal is to be employed after graduation from high school, the appropriate courses should be included in the IEP and addressed on the Graduation Options supplement; this begins documentation of the student's goals after graduation.
- Adult service providers (agencies) should be invited to ARD meetings prior to graduation, depending upon services needed by the individual student. If an agency commits to providing a service and that service is never provided, the ARD/IEP committee must reconvene to determine how that need will be met.

A Report for Students Exiting Public School or Graduating Seniors: The Summary of Performance (SOP)

- For all graduating seniors or students exiting public school because of age eligibilities, a Summary of Performance will be provided to the student, which includes the student's: postsecondary goals, academic achievement, functional performance, recommendations on how to assist the student in achieving his or her postsecondary goals, written recommendations of the agencies, and views of the parents and students.
- If the student graduates under option "c" or b3" (depending upon the year the student entered ninth grade) an evaluation will be included.
- Best practices includes the student in creating the SOP when possible and making the student aware of its contents.

- The SOP will be provided to the student for use with agency and post secondary educational environments to facilitate the student's post secondary transition success.
- The Summary of Performance should include the following:
 - Demographics: Enter campus, year of graduation, student's name, date of birth, primary and other disabilities, dominant language and date of most recent ARD/IEP committee meeting in the appropriate spaces.
 - Student's Interest: Select the student's post-secondary interest. Both employment and education may apply. If the student is interested in employment, select part time or full time. Complete career interest section. "College" is not acceptable, because this section requires a career goal. If the student is identified as ID or MH and will not be attending college or seeking employment complete this section with "day activities" and proceed accordingly.
 - Student's Strengths: Review PLAAFPs, also ask the student in what course he/she does best. (i.e. What are your favorite courses?). Attendance can also be included. Prompt the student if he/she cannot answer the question. If the student will be seeking employment, relate his/her strengths to the post-secondary career goal. This is more specific than student strengths and can include extra-curricular/community activities and other student accomplishments.
 - Recommendations/modifications/accommodations to consider for meeting post secondary education/training goals and/or employment goals: Ask the student what supports have worked for him/her in the past? (i.e. extended time, assignment notebook, etc.) and relate to the student's goal. If the student will be working with a job coach, place in this section.
 - Agency Information: Indicate how the student was linked to an agency, e.g. student is a client with (TWC, ACCOG), Student has completed an application with, student has met with a counselor at , student/parent received information about TWC on , etc.
- The school will ensure all graduating seniors have a graduation option identified and a Summary of Performance completed.

Samples: Post-Secondary Goals (PSG)

The student's PSG is to attend college/university to pursue a career

Mary's interests/preferences are in the medical field. After High School, Mary will attend a (4 or 2) year college to earn a certification/license as a nurse and work in the nursing field. The committee agreed that Mary can take recommended core courses, as well as organic chemistry to facilitate her goal. If a Junior or Senior, a TWC representative could attend the ARD/IEP committee meeting where Mary would fill out an application to TWC. . The Informal or Formal Functional Vocational Assessment was completed and utilized in transition planning. Monitoring of transition plans will be accomplished through report cards and IEP reviews during Mary's annual ARD/IEP committee meeting. If this is a graduation ARD/IEP committee meeting, the Summary of Performance would be completed and given to Mary and her mother.

The student's PSG is to get a job after high school

Jose's interests/preferences are in the auto mechanics field. After High School, Jose will get on- the-job training (or go to Lone Star College for Auto Mechanic Classes) to gain skills as a mechanic and work in the auto repair field. The committee agreed Jose take Auto Mechanics 1 and 2 to support that PSG. The Informal or Formal Functional Vocational Assessment was completed and utilized in

transition planning. If a Junior or Senior, a TWC representative could be contacted and participate in the ARD/IEP committee meeting by telephone. The Informal or Formal Functional Vocational Assessment was completed and utilized in transition planning. Monitoring of transition plans will be accomplished through report cards and IEP review during Jose's annual ARD/IEP committee meetings. If this is a graduation ARD/IEP committee meeting, the Summary of Performance will be completed and given to Jose and his mother.

The student's PSG is to live at home and participate in supported employment

Maria's interests/preferences are in the retail field. After High School, Maria will live at home and participate in supported employment to continue gaining skills in being in public places with appropriate behavior, keeping her hands and feet to herself and greeting others appropriately and with support (a job coach, parent, etc.) will volunteer in a retail type of environment each week. The committee agreed that Maria could take the following courses to facilitate her PSG of working in a retail type environment. If a Junior or Senior, a TWC representative and/or an ACCOG representative could attend the ARD/IEP committee meeting and Maria's parents could work with the representative and Maria to complete an application. The Informal or Formal Functional Vocational Assessment was and utilized in transition planning. Monitoring of transition plans will be accomplished through report cards and IEP review during Maria's annual ARD/IEP committee meetings. If this is a graduation ARD/IEP committee meeting, the Summary of Performance will be completed and given to Maria and her parents. With Maria and her parents completing agency paperwork, Maria will apply to link to an agency and/or participate in a day activity or sheltered workshop.

Since Maria needs support with Independent Living Skills a PSG for those supports should be written also. After High School, Maria will continue building skills, with her parents' support and guidance, to independently dress, brush teeth and comb hair.

STATE PERFORMANCE PLAN INDICATORS:

State Performance Plan Indicator 13

"Percent of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student's transition service needs.

There also must be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP Team meeting where transition services are to be discussed and evidence that, if appropriate, a representative of any participating agency was invited to the IEP Team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority."

State Performance Plan Indicator 14

"Percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and were: enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school, enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school or enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school."

SPP Indicator 14 - Definitions

- Enrolled in higher education - the student has been enrolled on a full-time or part-time basis in a community college (2-year) or college/university (4 or more years) for at least one complete term, at any time in the year since leaving high school.

- Competitive employment - the student has worked for pay at or above the minimum wage in a setting with others who are nondisabled for a period of 20 hours a week for at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes military employment.
- Enrolled in other postsecondary education or training - the student has been enrolled on a full-time or part-time basis for at least one complete term at any time in the year since leaving high school in an education or training program (e.g., Job Corps, adult education, workforce development program, vocational technical school which is less than a 2-year program).
- Some other employment - the student has worked for pay or been self-employed for a period of at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes working in a family business.

- **Resources**

- **Texas Transition and Employment Guide (English)**
- **Texas Transition and Employment Guide (Spanish)**
- **The ARC of San Antonio: Decision Making and Alternatives to Guardianship**
- **The ARC of Texas: Alternatives to Guardianship: Supported Decision-Making Agreements**
- **Catholic Charities: Guardian and Estate Planning Services**