

Transition Planning

In the Individualized Education Program (IEP), a transition plan includes goals, services and activities to help a student reach those goals. This plan must be in place by the time the child turns 16. We work to help IEP teams understand the process and what it takes to help make students' goals and dreams for their life after high school a reality!

Transition Considerations

Below is a short list of general considerations when helping students plan for their future. Some of these items will occur as part of the planning process, but others should be considered and completed with the collaborative efforts of parents, educators, and agencies. For ideas on activities that could be appropriate for a transition plan, check our website, www.arkansastransition.com.

4-5 Years Before Leaving the School District

- Explore to help identify career interests and skills, (complete interest and career inventories, watch career videos, interview adults in various careers, etc.)
- Identify additional education or training requirements based on career interests.
- Learn to effectively communicate interests, preferences, and needs and discuss disability and accommodations needed
- Explore options for post- secondary education (admission criteria, disability supports, financial aid, etc.)
- Learn and practice self-determination skills—set a short-term goal and track progress
- Play a role in the IEP meeting (state your goals, share interests, discuss classes)
- Investigate assistive technology tools that can help support goals (apps, low and high tech options, etc.)
- Identify and begin learning skills necessary for transportation, personal health care, money management and future living arrangements

2-3 Years Before Leaving the School District

- Continue each year with ongoing transition assessments to determine contents of the Transition Plan
- Consider person-centered planning or CIRCLES to obtain information for students with complex needs
- Become knowledgeable of service providers that can help make progress toward student goals
- Gather information on post-secondary programs and the support services offered
- Make arrangements to take college or vocational school entrance exams using accommodations, if necessary.
- Inform students of Rights and Responsibilities
- Talk with the school counselor to match career interests and skills with vocational course work and community work experiences
- Create a budget using the desired career's typical salary (try Real Life Arkansas)
- Open a bank account.
- Obtain a part-time job if appropriate
- Help parents obtain resources for shared decision making and guardianship

1 Year Before Leaving the School District

- Explore and when possible, enroll in vocational classes at the High School or Area Vocational School
- Apply for agency services (Supplemental Security Income, Independent Living Services, Vocational Rehabilitation)
- Apply for Financial Aid for college
- Contact Disability Support Services at the college level to inquire about services
- Discuss differences between high school and college.
- Practice developing interview skills
- Practice completing online applications
- Implement mock interviews as a classroom activity
- Specify desired job and obtain paid employment with supports as needed
- Assume responsibility for health care needs (making appointments, filling and taking prescriptions etc.)
- Plan recreational activities within the community
- Register to vote and for selective service (if a male)

Possible Student Roles & Responsibilities

- Be aware of their disability, know ways to advocate for themselves and understand their strengths and needs
- Explore both education and career opportunities
- Choose post-secondary goals through exploration activities
- Be knowledgeable of service options available to them
- Recognize their likes/dislikes
- Learn the transition parts of their IEP and attend the IEP meeting

Possible Parent Roles & Responsibilities

- Fully informed partners in education and adult services
- Accountable partners for action upon and within the system
- Collaborators with educators and agencies
- Decision-makers and evaluators
- Role models, trainers, mentors, and instructors
- Prepare student by assigning responsibilities at home

Possible Counselor Roles & Responsibilities

- Essential input like assessment or inventory results with the IEP team to help in transition planning
- Review the individual transition needs of each student and periodically review the IEPs of students with disabilities
- Focus assistance on individuals rather than programs
- Advocate for students with disabilities and encourage them to develop specific skills sets such as communication skills, organization skills, career awareness, etc.
- Provide guidance directly to general educators and special subject teachers

Possible Special Educator Roles & Responsibilities

- Know and understand components of a compliant transition plan and gain collaboration from others as they facilitate the transition process
- Provide appropriate assessments to students to determine their needs, interests and preferences
- Correspond with their Transition Consultant and attend trainings regularly
- Allow students opportunities to set goals, make choices and decisions and explore within their daily activities
- Provide appropriate instruction related to post-school goals
- Connect agencies and students and their families to obtain the services needed to reach their post-secondary goals
- Provide opportunities for parents to become active partners

Possible Agency Personnel Roles & Responsibilities

- Collaborate with students, schools, families and other agencies
- Provide appropriate services to eligible students
- Attend IEP meetings when invited and appropriate
- Participate in agency fests and transition fairs
- Participate in the Arkansas Transition Services Advisory Group

Possible General Educator Roles & Responsibilities

- Provide instruction for transition-related activities in their classroom
- Be aware of the student's post-school goals
- Participate in IEP meetings if the student is in their general education classroom
- Consistently provide accommodations and modifications as required in the IEP
- Advocate for all their students