

IEP TRANSITION COMPONENT AND INDIVIDUAL TRANSITION PLAN (ITP)

1. Based on the language from the reauthorization of IDEA (2004) the current revision of North Carolina's Procedures Governing Programs and Services for Students with Special Needs states that the IEP must include:

- (a) Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 14, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and updated annually thereafter, the IEP must include a statement of initial transition components including the child's needs, preferences and interests, and course(s) of study (such as advanced placement classes or a vocational education program).
- (b) Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and updated annually, thereafter, the IEP must include-
 - (i) Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills; and
 - (ii) The transition services needed to assist the child in reaching those goals, including if appropriate, a statement of interagency responsibilities or any needed linkages.

Transition Defined:

IDEA defines transition as, "A coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability that includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation."

In addition, IDEA mandates that every student in a special education program must include transition goals in their IEP form age sixteen on and must include a statement of transition plans for students fourteen and older. These transition goals must address each of the areas enumerated in the definition or provide a statement detailing why they are not needed (McPartland, 2005).

IDEA Mandates:

1. Beginning at age 14 a "statement of transition services," otherwise thought of a delineation of the course of study for the student, needs to be included in the IEP.
2. Beginning at age 16, or 14 when appropriate, the IEP must include transition activities that address instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post school adult living objectives , and when appropriate the

acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation. Document why objectives are not needed in any of these areas if they are not included.

3. When the student reaches the age of majority, age 18, all the rights accorded to the parents are transferred to the student. The student and parent must be made aware of this transfer at least one year in advance and this notification must be documented in the IEP.

Transition Activity Areas:

1. Instruction: Whenever a student is engaged in academic or related activities, whether in regular or special education in any transition domain, instruction is occurring. In addition, instruction in all domain areas contributes to the ultimate goal of preparing the student for life after high school.

The central goal of instruction is to help the student be as prepared as possible to manipulate information before leaving high school.

2. Related Service: This domain refers to services available while students are still in school.

While these services are provided throughout the student's tenure, make the connections so students and parents have the links they need when the student leaves the public school setting.

3. Community Experiences: The topics covered in this area must be taught in school but also at home with the family and may even include instruction and practice provided by outside agencies. Instruction in this domain should occur in the natural setting of the community whenever possible.

Domain areas could include: 1) Transportation, 2) Accessing Community Services, 3) Leisure. All are important and should be explored for every student with special needs no matter how involved or minimal their disability might be.

4. Employment: If students are able to work during their tenure in high school, it will greatly increase their chances of being employable once they leave.

Domain areas could include: 1) How to look for a job, 2) How to interview for and secure a job, 3) How to keep a job, 4) Fulfilling the complete prerequisites for a job, 5) How and when to leave a job.

5. Adult Living: Critical survival adult skills could include: 1) Students need to be able to make informed, satisfying career choices, 2) They need to be able to set goals and modify these goals as needed, 3) They need to be able to advocate for themselves.

6. Daily Living Skills (if appropriate): We usually equate this area for students with significant disabilities. Students with more mild disabilities may still need assistance.

Instruction in these skills can be provided by regular education courses, at home with the family or through specially designed instruction.

7. Functional Vocational Evaluation: If working with Vocational Rehabilitation in this area a signed Consent for Release of Information must be in the file prior to adding to the Individual Transition Plan. If student will be referred, statement should include "at time release of information has been made".

Adapted from: *Implementing Ongoing Transition Plans for the IEP: A Student-Driven Approach to IDEA Mandates*; Pat McPartland, 2005; Attainment Company, Inc.