

A Guide

Secondary Transition

There is no one formula for a successful transition. The path through and out of high school is rarely a straight line, in great part because learning and growing are synonymous with change—changing minds, discovering new goals, altering preferences, and developing new understanding and strengths. So while transition efforts do involve a process, include a plan, and entail some very specific requirements that are defined by law, they also present puzzles to be solved and paths to be uncovered. Within the context of an educational system that is responsive to each child and to the whole child, transition can be flexible, developmentally appropriate, and reflective of each child’s individuality—respecting evolving dreams and creating an environment where those dreams can become reality. This guide lists many of the activities and considerations that may be part of the transition process for students with disabilities as they leave K–12 education and enter adulthood—college, technical training, career, and community living.

Context

Transition for students with disabilities consists in general of three interconnecting parts:

1. Beginning as early as possible, students and their family members are part of Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams that work collaboratively to develop immediate- and long-range goals mapped to employment, along with plans to achieve those goals.
2. Students’ high school experiences are shaped to ensure that the students acquire the skills and knowledge they need to realize their goals and dreams for success in adult life.
3. The resources, post-school supports, and programs that students need for adult success are put in place before the student graduates from high school or turns 22, whichever comes first.

The Role of All Adults

From birth, parents, caregivers, and teachers can contribute to each child’s eventual success in adult life by remembering that career development starts young—and then:

- Helping the child develop communication skills
- Promoting social-emotional competence
- Supporting self-advocacy skills
- Encouraging positive behaviors
- Having conversations with the child about
 - what the child likes to do
 - what the child’s strengths are
 - what supports the child needs
 - what the child might like to do for work as an adult
- Advocating for inclusive settings in schools

Transition Planning Checklist

Before the student turns 16—but ideally as early as possible—transition planning is initiated and integrated into the student’s IEP. Essential parts of transition planning include:

- Student invitation to the meetings
- Transition assessments
- Measurable annual goals
- Postsecondary goals
- Postsecondary goals updated annually
- Transition services and activities
- Collaboration with adult agencies, where appropriate
- Course of study to support goals
- Summary of Performance (SOP) completed before the student leaves high school

Resources in Schools

Local educational agencies (LEAs) have some flexibility in the way they use their education dollars to address the needs of the students they serve. As a result, the transition programs, resources, and supports often differ from one LEA or school to the next. Within each local context, however, parents and educators will want to find ways to ensure person-centered plans, career interests surveys, knowledge and awareness of postsecondary education options, and training and connections with agencies that provide job-readiness skills and support.

The infographic on the next two pages was designed to give students, parents, educators, and service providers a sense of the elements involved in transition, the options that may be available, and the language they may need to ask questions, advocate for more or different services, and ultimately secure the best possible postschool outcomes for California’s students.



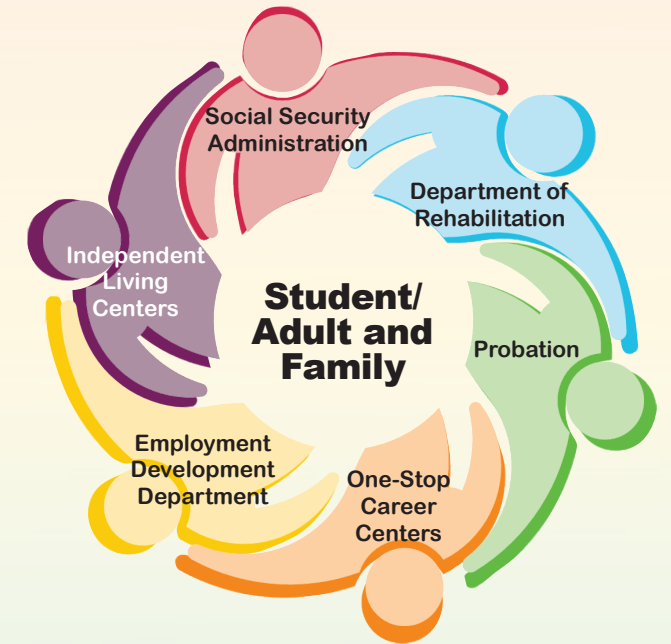
Transition Road Map

Destination: Employment (Competitive Integrated Employment—CIE)

- Post-high school Options**
- Adult school
 - Apprenticeships
 - Trade school
 - Online industry certification
 - Community college
 - Industry certification
 - AA degree
 - Transfer degree
 - Four-year college



Agency Support for Youth and Adults



Job-search strategies



A-G Requirements **CTE Pathway**

Vocational Assessment

Students lead their own IEPs

High School

High Academic Standards

Vocational Assessment

Students contribute to the formal transition plans in their IEPs

Junior High School

High Academic Standards

Elementary School

Students are involved in their own IEPs

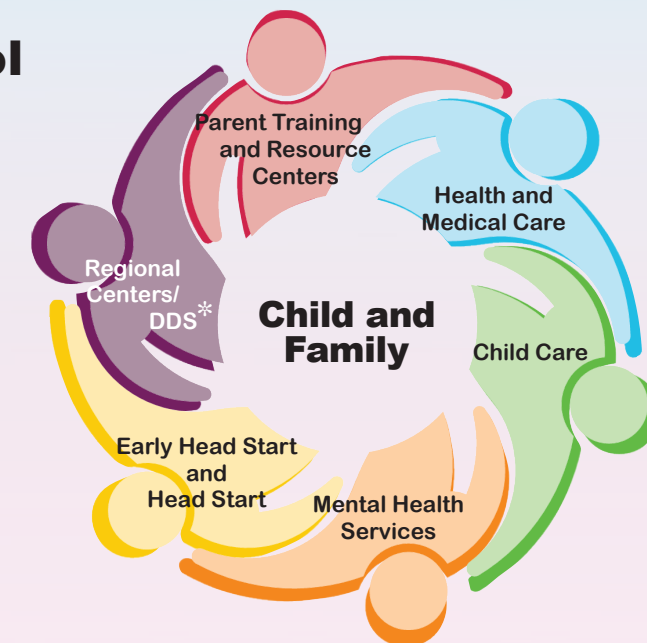
Preschool
Part B begins

Ongoing family engagement



Always listening to the student's voice: "Nothing about me without me."

Agency Support for Young Children



Key

- * For students with developmental disabilities
- A-G Requirements:** The high school courses that students must complete (with a grade of C or better) to be eligible for admission to the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU).
- DDS:** Department of Developmental Services
- CTE:** Career Technical Education
- IEP:** Individualized Education Program
- Part B:** IDEA preschool and school services
- Part C:** IDEA Early Start services for infants and toddlers

Birth

Part C

High Expectations from Families

Ideas for Activities Along the Path

Gaining Work Experience: Job-Skills Development

- Start in preschool and focus through the grades on taking responsibility, working cooperatively, solving problems, managing time, etc.
- Work-based learning, e.g., WorkAbility
- Career-Technical Training
- Regional Occupational Programs (ROP)
- Transition Partnership Program
- We Can Work
- Workplace readiness training
- One-Stop
- Here to Career
- California Adult Education
- Get a job

Learning What's Possible: Career Preparation/ Development

- Career fairs
- Job shadowing
- Work-based learning
- Internships
- Field trips to employers
- Interviewing employees
- Resource fairs
- Job exploration activities
- Field trips to local schools
- Guided career development
- Job and career counseling

Learning Strengths & Preferences

- Person-centered planning
- Career/interest assessments
- Student organizations

Developing Essential Knowledge

- Financial literacy
- Benefits planning
- Self-determination coaching
- Self-advocacy training
- Self-awareness

Connecting and Engaging

- Family chores
- Hobbies
- Extracurricular activities
- Volunteer work
- Summer jobs
- Public transportation
- Parks & recreation
- Community events
- Libraries
- Sports

Laws Guiding the Way

IDEA makes schools and their local educational agencies (LEAs) responsible for preparing students with disabilities for adult life through a post-school transition plan that is updated annually [34 CFR §300.320(b)]. Students must be invited to the IEP meetings where these plans are discussed as well as representatives from the agencies that are part of the transition plan [34 CFR §300.321(b)]. The transition plan must address the following areas:

- The student's goals for employment, independent living, community engagement, and continued learning [34 CFR §300.43]
- Employment [34 CFR §300.320]
- Transition plans must be in place and integrated with the student's IEP no later than the student's sixteenth birthday [34 CFR §300.320(b)]
- Instruction, related services, and community experiences [34 CFR §300.43]
- If appropriate, independent living skills [34 CFR §300.320]
- Measurable postsecondary goals based on age-appropriate transition assessments [34 CFR §300.320]
- A coordinated set of services and activities that are selected to support each student's successful transition from school to adult life. These services must be based on the student's interests, strengths, and preferences [34 CFR §300.43].
- A Summary of Performance (SOP)—a summary of the student's academic achievement and functional performance when the student is no longer eligible for services under IDEA [34 CFR §300.305(e)(3)]

Federal Performance Indicators

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires each state to develop a state performance plan/annual performance report (SPP/APR) that evaluates the state's efforts to implement the requirements and purposes of the IDEA. The SPP/APRs include indicators that measure child and family outcomes and other indicators that measure compliance with the requirements of the IDEA. Two of these indicators are designed to reflect how the state and its local educational agencies are preparing students with disabilities for adult life. California reports annually on the following:

Indicator 13: Secondary Transition Goals and Services

The 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 services 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.

Indicator 14: Post-School Outcomes

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.
- 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.