OKLAHOMA'S TRANSITION EDUCATION HANDBOOK

2011 EDITION

OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

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Facilitating Transition of Students with IEPs from School to Further Education, Employment, or Independent Living

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The information in this handbook is factually supported by the regulations issued in the 2010 Amended Policies and Procedures for Special Education In Oklahoma. Additional factual support came from practices suggested in the 2009 First-Year Special Education Teacher Handbook.

The content in the Transition Education Handbook was reviewed and approved by the Oklahoma Transition Council. This Handbook may be copied for no cost for use by pre-service and in-service educators, families of students with disabilities, and related service providers interested in transition education practices. Programs and services dedicated to improving the educational outcomes of students with disabilities may maintain a copy of this Handbook at their website for free distribution.

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❶ When Transition Education Must Begin

Quality transition education improves the likelihood for school graduation and positive post-school outcomes. Federal legislation provides the minimum age that transition planning must begin. Oklahoma, as did almost half the states, opted to begin formal transition education earlier than the federal minimum age.

Federal
IDEA 2004 requires that transition planning begin no later than the first individualized education program (IEP) to be in effect when the child is 16, and updated annually thereafter.

Oklahoma
Oklahoma's revised *Policy and Procedures* manual indicates that transition issues must be addressed during the student's ninth grade year or upon turning age 16, whichever comes first. Transition planning may begin at a younger age if deemed necessary by the IEP team.

Note: Several Oklahoma school districts have opted to begin transition planning at age 14 for all students with disabilities. Check with specific school districts to determine if mandatory transition education age begins earlier than the state's minimum requirement. Across the country, 57% of the states (including the District of Columbia) begin transition education between the ages of 13 and 15.

BEST PRACTICE HINTS

As indicated in Oklahoma's First Year Special Education Teacher Handbook: "It is best practice to begin transition planning services during the school year before the child turns 14, so that programs and services are implemented appropriately and in a timely manner." Two situations demonstrate why an earlier starting date is important.

Two Situations May Prompt Holding Transition IEP Meetings At Age 14 or Earlier
Specific issues or situations may require educators to hold transition IEP meetings earlier than the state required minimum age. When the two issues below are in play, best practice suggests that transition planning meetings be held in 8th grade or earlier.

1. Postsecondary education financial support. Oklahoma provides scholarship opportunities through the Oklahoma's Promise program for students who meet specific financial and academic requirements.

Students must complete applications for the Oklahoma Promise program in the 8th, 9th, or 10th grade. Students who have an IEP and qualify for the Oklahoma Promise program need to develop a college prep academic course of study before entering high school, and this should be discussed during middle school IEP meetings. Students, their families, and educators need to make certain that students who plan to attend an Oklahoma institute of higher education or career technology center apply for the Oklahoma's Promise program when they are 13, 14, or 15 years old. If students complete the first two years of high school following the "core curriculum" sequence, they may lack the academic courses required to obtain an Oklahoma Promise scholarship. Careful consideration should to be given to the post-secondary education goals of students when the freshman year course of study is created in 8th grade. Thus, best practice suggests that for students who want to attend a postsecondary education program, the IEP team should strongly consider transition planning in 8th grade. For more information on Oklahoma's Promise program go to www.okhighered.org/okpromise.

2. Interagency Linkages. Students with disabilities may require support throughout adulthood or as part of their transition from high school into adulthood. Students requiring support from the Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Services Division (DDSD) must begin the application process early to increase the likelihood of obtaining services upon completion of high school, because many of the DDSD sponsored programs have long waiting lists. Families and students must be made aware of this process and assisted to enroll when their son or daughter is as young as 3 years old. Thus, best practice suggests holding transition-planning meetings in middle school or even grade school for students who may need post-high school support from DDSD.

❷ Transition Defined

Purpose of Special Education
Oklahoma's special education policies and procedures ensure that all students with an IEP have access to a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepares students with IEPs for employment, further education, and independent living. Desired employment, further education, and independent living outcomes become the postsecondary goals that drive the transition planning process and the secondary IEP.

The transition planning process provides opportunities for the young adult with disabilities to ponder and identify post-school goals. Transition planning provides educators the opportunity to structure the IEP transition components to facilitate attainment of students' post-school goals.

Transition Services Facilitate Movement from High School Completion to Adult Life
Transition services provide coordinated activities to improve the academic and functional achievement of the young adult with an IEP to facilitate successful movement from high school graduation to:
- postsecondary education, including vocational education/training
- employment
- independent living
- community participation

Transition Services Based on Needs Mediated by Strengths and Interests
Transition services are based on students' needs while taking into consideration students' strengths, preferences, and interests.

Specific Transition Services
The Amended Policies and Procedures for Special Education in Oklahoma indicate that Transition services include:

Instruction. Teaching specific skills in both formal and informal educational settings and in the community.

Related Services. Physical therapy, social work assistance, speech language therapy, school health assistance, rehabilitation counseling, and other services that support developing skills that lead toward attaining postsecondary goals.

Community Experiences. Opportunities provided to learn skills and experience events outside the school and the school classroom in the greater community. This includes job shadowing, tours of postsecondary educational facilities, community work experiences, recreational experiences, volunteerism, and learning and using community resources.

Development of Employment and Other Post-school Adult-Living Objectives. Developing additional post-secondary goals and annual objectives through career exploration activities, self-awareness and self-advocacy efforts, and vocational experiences.

Acquisition of Daily Living Skills (when appropriate). Creating opportunities at school and in the community to learn skills to live independently or with support. These skills include housekeeping, medication self-management, transportation and mobility, self-advocacy and self-awareness, and others associated with being an active community member.

Functional Vocational Evaluation. Includes situational assessments at actual job sites and use of checklists and other tools that assess student interests and skills across a variety of job sites.

Transition IEP Concepts
Several concepts guide development of the transition section of the IEP. These include:

- Postsecondary goals based upon student needs, interests, and strengths and address "what the young adult wants to do after high school, such as where the young adult wants to live, learn, work, and participate in the community" (Amended Policies and Procedures for Special Education in Oklahoma, 2010, p. 154).

- IEP transition components, including annual transition goals, coordinated activities, and the course of study, relate directly to the postsecondary goals and aid in attainment of the postsecondary goals.

- An IEP designed so that high school experiences assist the young adult in learning the skills needed to attain the post-school goals.

BEST PRACTICE HINTS

Transition Education: A Fundamental Aspect of Secondary Education

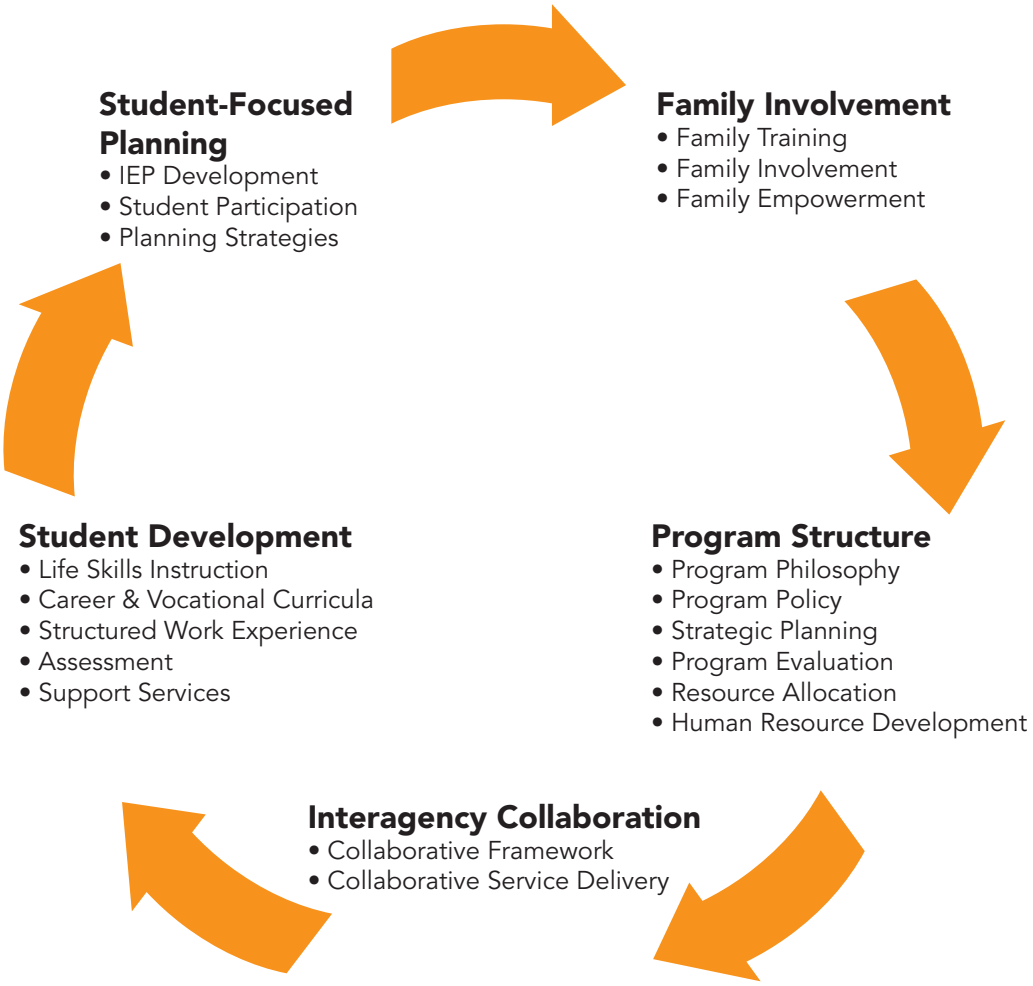
Transition education implies that transition is not an add-on program for students with disabilities once they reach transition age, but rather transition education becomes the fundamental basis of secondary education (Kohler & Field, 2003). Transition education uses identified best practices to provide opportunities for students to learn the skills and have the experiences that are associated with post-school success. Together, using best practices to teach students critical transition skills and providing supports as students transition from high school into their adult life enable students to attain postsecondary goals.

Transition Taxonomy

Oklahoma's transition education practices follow a model called the Taxonomy of Transition Programming. Kohler's (1996) transition education model depicted below consists of five components. Together they detail the transition practices and policies needed to prepare students for employment, further education, and independent living.

To read more about the transition taxonomy and to better understand each component, the entire Taxonomy can be downloaded at http://homepages.wmich.edu/~kohlerp/pdf/Taxonomy.pdf.

The Taxonomy for Transition Programming



Transition Education Best Practices
Test, Fowler et al (2009) examined the transition research to identify practices that had evidence supporting their use and clustered the results by the Transition Taxonomy areas.

Student Focused Planning Area of the Transition Taxonomy
Both the *Self-Advocacy Strategy and the Self-Directed IEP* had a strong level of evidence supporting their use to increase student involvement in IEP meetings.

Student Development Area of the Transition Taxonomy
Both teaching life stills and teaching purchasing skills had a strong level of evidence supporting their use to teach student independent living skills.

Family Involvement Area of the Transition Taxonomy
A moderate level of research evidence found support for teaching parents and other family members about transition.

Program Structures
A moderate level of research supported two program structures. Research found establishing community-based instruction useful to teach students needed skills, and extending transition support structures beyond the typical secondary school year useful to ensure successful transition into employment.

Student Behaviors Associated with Post-school Success
A review of transition research identified 10 clusters of student behaviors and experiences associated with school and post-school success (McConnell et al., 2011). These include:

Knowledge of Strengths and Limitations
Successful students know personal areas of mastery and limited ability. The student knows how the strengths and limitations affect him or her and identifies situations in which successes and failures may occur. Students may not use correct terminology, yet need to be aware of their strengths and limitations in academic and nonacademic settings and must be able to communicate these strengths and limitations to others. Successful individuals predetermine situations and tasks where they most likely will and will not be successful.

Actions Related to Strengths and Limitations
Once students are aware of their strengths and limitations, they must act upon this knowledge by seeking situations where they maximize strengths and minimize limitations. Students must actively seek situations to use their strengths in school and in the community. For example, if a student has a disability in the area of written expression, he or she may choose to become a club photographer rather than the club secretary. Students need to develop skills and strategies to compensate for limitations, such as lip reading, memory aids, and use of assistive technology. Students may create new strategies to accomplish tasks that are difficult. Successful individuals consider their limitations when choosing employment options and do not choose careers that highlight limitations.

Disability Awareness
People who experience success after high school are aware of their disability and do not allow the disability to define them. Some successful individuals consider the disability as a positive aspect of life. This begins with the student understanding the definition of the word "disability." Students need to understand the challenges they will face due to the disability and learn to confront and avoid specific situations based on this knowledge. Students need to explain their disability in a variety of ways to ensure others with and without disability-related knowledge will understand accommodations needed for success. Students need to practice explaining their disability to postsecondary disability services providers and future employers to request accommodations. Students may obtain disability information from a variety of settings including the Internet, doctors, teachers, and family.

Persistence
Many successful individuals with disabilities express the importance of persistence in all aspects of life. Individuals with disabilities who experienced success in postsecondary educational settings began college knowing they would spend more hours studying and completing assignments required than other students and began this behavior in high school. They did not give up when faced with adversity, but learned to shift goals when necessary to become successful. Successful college students with disabilities learned to use a variety of flexible strategies to continue their college pursuit including changing professors, classes, majors, colleges, and seeking individuals for assistance.

Proactive Involvement

Successful students effectively interact with family, friends, classmates, educators, and other adults while participating in school organizations or in community social organizations. Family and friends are important to the career plans and methods to find employment for individuals with disabilities. Proactivity predicts post-school success by stating that successful individuals with disabilities "were engaged in the world around them, politically, economically, and socially. They participated in community activities and took an active role in their families, neighborhoods, and friendship groups" (Goldberg, Higgins, Raskind, & Herman, 2003, p. 226).

Goal Setting and Attainment

Goal-oriented students have set and attained goals in the past and can plan to set and attain goals now and in the future. Students who are successful reaching postsecondary goals define realistic goals that match interests and skills. They are able to break long-term goals into manageable steps, continuously monitor their progress, problem-solve by using supports, and adjust goals as needed based upon feedback. Goal-oriented students tend to prioritize and complete smaller goals or steps in a logical order to achieve a larger goal.

Employment

To experience successful post-school employment, students must first express a desire to obtain a job, and then actively seek a position. Students with disabilities who obtain employment during high school are more likely to maintain employment after high school. Students who experience employment are more able to find a job that matches their skills and interests, and are more able to seek and find jobs in the community than those who did not experience employment during high school. Employers tend to prefer employees with prior work experience, and students may use the prior work experience as career exploration. Completion of an unpaid internship might also teach necessary work-related behaviors, and those students who complete internships are more likely to obtain jobs after high school. Students can also demonstrate job-readiness skills by attending school on time, working hard, getting along with others, and managing personal hygiene.

Self-Advocacy

Students who are self-advocates look for and use various resources to learn more about their disabilities, legal rights, and supports or accommodations including the Internet, educators, and support people. They appropriately disclose their disability, actively participate in transition IEP meetings, recall transition goals outside of the IEP meeting, request appropriate supports or accommodations according to legal rights, and know documentation required. Students need to use accommodations responsibly and not take advantage of rights to accommodations and ask for support when appropriate and necessary and not demonstrate learned helplessness. The IEP meeting provides an opportunity for students with disabilities to practice self-advocacy skills, and students take an active role in conducting and leading the meeting

Supports

Students with disabilities who have a support group of positive individuals tend to experience more post-school success. Support individuals consist of persons who have a positive influence on the student by providing realistic expectations, modeling appropriate behaviors and strategies to strengthen skills, and assisting the student in setting and modifying goals. Successful students can identify, in a variety of situations, individuals who are a positive source of support and those who are not positive sources of support. Successful students appropriately create, maintain, and utilize a positive support system by identifying when support is necessary, what type of support needed, and seek individuals both inside and outside their current support system for the needed support. Students should not rely completely on the support group to accomplish goals and tasks and maintain the support group by showing appreciation and reciprocity.

Utilization of Resources

Students may not have positive individuals in their immediate support group who are able to assist in all situations. When this occurs, successful individuals with disabilities actively seek people and resources outside their immediate network to help with a present need. High school students may begin to practice independently seeking assistance from support individuals at school, such as a coach, secretary, or school counselor. Successful individuals also use the Internet to obtain information and seek assistance from possible support services or community agencies.

Summary
Transition Education provides opportunities to teach students the skills needed for post-school success and the opportunities for students to learn and practice these skills. Educators may infuse activities to teach these behaviors that are associated with post-school success into general curriculum and use the IEP meeting as an avenue to allow students to demonstrate these behaviors. These also prove a pool of behaviors that the IEP team can use to develop annual transition goals.

❸ Preparing for the IEP Transition Meeting

Notification of Meeting Form

When the IEP team members discuss secondary transition education, four items need to be included on the notification of meeting form (OSDE Form 6) that will be sent to parents:

1. Indicate on the notification form that issues associated with the student transitioning from school to adult life will be discussed at the meeting.
2. Indicate that the student will be invited to attend the meeting.
3. Include the student's name among participants listed on the notification form.
4. Include the staff name (if known) and agency that may be responsible for paying or providing transition services among the participants listed on the notification form.

Consent Needed for Agency Staff to Attending IEP Meeting
The school will need to obtain written parental consent (or student consent if he or she has reached age of majority, which in Oklahoma is 18) before a community agency representative can attend the IEP meeting. The duration for the consent for an agency representative to attend a student's IEP meetings can be for a specific IEP meeting, or it may last up to a year. The signed consent form must be in writing and kept in the student's confidential file.

Invite Students of Transition Age to Attend Their IEP Meeting
Students of transition age must be invited to attend their IEP transition meeting. Document the student invitation on the Notification of Meeting form. Best practices teach students the terminology, roles of the IEP team, and procedures prior to students attending and participating in their IEP meeting.

Expect Students to Actively Participate in Transition Planning Discussions
According to Oklahoma's Amended Policy and Procedures for Special Education (2010), "students should be expected to actively participate in the discussion of his or her future goals and plans during the IEP meeting" (p. 156). Active participation means that students engage in discussions about all aspects of the transition sections of the IEP.

If the young adult does not attend the IEP meeting, steps must be taken to inform the IEP team of the student's strengths, preferences, and interests.

Holding Meeting Without Student Being Present
If the student has been invited to attend the transition IEP meeting, but declines, the meeting can continue as long as steps have been taken to obtain information from the student regarding plans after high school, but the Oklahoma's Amended Policy and Procedures for Special Education (2010) states, "the young adult should be expected to actively participate in the discussion of his or her future goals and plans during the IEP meeting" (p. 156).

Students 18 Years or Older Receives Notification Form
Notification of Meeting (OSDE Form 6) will be addressed to students 18 years old or older, and a copy will be sent to the parents.

Student Denies Participation In IEP Meeting
Individuals that the school invites to the meeting have the right to attend, and students may not dismiss them. If the school invites parents and if the student, who is 18 years old or older, does not want the parents to attend, parents have the right to attend the meeting because the school invited them.

BEST PRACTICE HINTS

A best practice transition education engages students in the IEP process. This can be done in many different ways, including:

Students Write and Deliver Invitation to IEP Meetings

To encourage student involvement in the entire IEP transition planning process, provide the opportunity for students to write invitations to their IEP meetings. They will include the date, time, and location, then personally have students deliver the invitations to those who need to attend the IEP meetings and others that the student and parents wish to invite.

NOTE: As long as parents provide written permission (or students, if they are 18 years old or older) students may invite their best friend or other important people in their life to the meeting.

Students Learn How to Actively Participate In Their IEP Meetings

Active student involvement in IEP meetings has been identified as an effective transition practice and being actively involved increases several student skills that research has identified as being associated with post-school success. To avoid students becoming token IEP team members, they need to be taught what to do at their IEP transition meetings and provided opportunities to interact at their meetings. Teachers have used the materials described below to teach needed IEP participation skills in several different formats, including in team-taught English classes, resource room settings, and in stand-alone student "leadership" retreats. In these leadership days, teachers bring students together for a day or a couple of mornings and teach the lessons in a condensed format.

Me! Lessons to Teach Self-Awareness and Self-Advocacy

This free lesson package is available from OU's Zarrow Center web site (zarrowcenter.ou.edu) under the Transition Education Materials link. The Me! lessons teach students to understand their disability and abilities, rights and responsibilities, the IEP, and self-advocacy skills. Students develop a portfolio that details their self-understanding and documents needed to facilitate the transition from high school to adult life. The lessons align to the Oklahoma Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS).

Student-Directed Transition Planning Lessons

These free lessons available from OU's Zarrow Center web site (zarrowcenter.ou.edu) under the Transition Education Materials link teach students to develop a script that will provide information needed for students to become actively involved in transition planning discussions. Using self, family, and educator provided feedback, students determine their post-school goals and other aspects about themselves, including information needed for the present level of performance and other IEP sections.

Student Involvement in IEP Meeting Lesson Packages

Several lesson packages, including the Self-Directed IEP, teach students the skills to actively participate in their IEP meetings. The Self-Directed IEP, for instance, teaches students to:

- Begin the meeting by stating its purpose;
- Introduce everyone and explain role in the meeting;
- Review past goals and progress made in attaining the goals;
- Ask for others' feedback;
- State educational and transition goals;
- Ask questions if something is said that is not understood;
- Deal with differences in opinion;
- State support needed to attain goals;
- Summarize the plan;
- Close meeting by thanking everyone for attending and offering input and
- Work on attaining the goals.

❹ Transition Assessment Essentials

Transition assessments represent an essential transition education practice for students with disabilities. Transition assessments, when used effectively, lead students from post-school uncertainty to a well-developed transition plan to accomplish post-secondary goals (Leconte, 2006). Federal law and Oklahoma Policies clearly indicate educators need to use the results from transition assessments to develop transition postsecondary goals.

Federal

IDEA 2004 requires appropriate measurable post-secondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training and education, employment, and where appropriate, independent living skills (Menchetti, 2008).

Oklahoma
The Amended Policies and Procedures for Special Education in Oklahoma (2010) specify that transition assessments will be used to assist young adults to make informed decisions about their transition goals and will be "one component in making transition decisions" (p. 159). To facilitate understanding and decision making, transition assessment results need to be included in the IEP document "in a language and form that parent(s) and young adults understand" (p. 159).

The Amended Policies and Procedures for Special Education In Oklahoma (2010) in the Instructions for Completing the IEP indicates that:

Transition assessments may include, but are not limited to broad-based transition assessments, self-determination assessments, interest inventories, life skills assessments, academic assessments, and social assessments. . . Assessment results shall be used to determine annual transition IEP goals necessary for the student to develop skills that will enable him or her to reach postsecondary goal(s). The type of assessment utilized for each student will vary based on the student's needs, strengths, preferences, and interests, and may change from year to year, depending on progress achieved each year (p. 314).

The results of the transition assessments will help develop annual transition goals that lead to attainment of postsecondary employment, further education, and independent living goals. Attempts should be made to use the same assessments annually to enable progress to be demonstrated across time.

Types of Assessments
As long as the transition assessments match the student's skills, they can be paper-pencil tools, community-based, or on-line. The law indicates that transition assessments need to be used to facilitate development of transition goals, and the plural use of the word assessment implies that more than one transition assessment is needed. Usually these are informal assessments and provide information for IEP teams to include into Present Level sections of the IEP and to facilitate development of transition goals. Three broad types of transition assessments exist that many educators find useful to assist students in developing postsecondary and annual transition goals.

Independent Living Assessments
These assessments identify student strengths and needs across the skills needed to live at home with parents, in the community, or to access community services.

Example Independent Living Assessments
Casey Life Skills and the Enderle-Severson Transition Assessments are two independent living assessments that many teachers use.

Vocational Interest and Skill Assessments
Interest assessments aid student career exploration by providing a narrow set of career domains for students to consider. Vocational skills assessments provide students a means to match their skills with job requirements.

Example Vocational Interest Assessments
Many secondary special education teachers in Oklahoma use the Oklahoma Career Information System (OKCIS) website (http://okcis.intocareers.org/) as a source for a vocational interest inventory and career exploration opportunities. This is a password-protected site, and usually the school counselor can provide the information needed to access it. Another vocational interest assessment is KeyTrain (www.keytrain.com). KeyTrain is the complete interactive training system for career readiness skills, based on ACT's WorkKeys® assessment system and the National Career Readiness Certificate.

Self-Determination Assessments
Students with higher levels of self-determination skills have better post-school outcomes. These assessments identify student self-determination skills and needs, and some examine opportunities at home and school to develop self-determination skills.

Self-Determination Assessments
The OU-Zarrow Center website (http://www.ou.edu/content/education/centers-and-partnerships/zarrow.html) has available several self-determination assessments that may be downloaded and used by educators at no cost.

Annual Assessment Process
Transition assessments need to be completed at least annually prior to the transition IEP meeting. Annual assessments will depict skill progress across time and will denote changes in interests.

Parental Permission to Administer Transition Assessment Not Needed

Transition assessments are considered to be a typical special education instructional practice and typically **do not** determine eligibility for services. Thus, transition assessments do not require parental permission prior to their use. However, parental notification of pending transition assessments will increase the likelihood of parent involvement in the process as many transition assessments have parent, educator, and student versions. If transition assessments may result in a change of placement, then parental approval would be prudent prior to administration of the transition assessments.

Additional Assessment Resources

The OU Zarrow Center's website (zarrowcenter.ou.edu) has collected several no-cost self-determination assessments, and under the Oklahoma Transition Council tab, PowerPoint files can be downloaded that provide descriptions of numerous free or low-cost transition assessments and where they can be found.

Contact the local Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services counselor, as he or she will most likely be able to provide information about additional transition assessments.

5 Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance

Results of transition assessments will be included in OSDE's IEP Form 7 in the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance section (PLEP). Transition assessment information will be "one component in making transition decisions" (Oklahoma Amended Policies and Procedures for Special Education, 2010, p. 159). The PLEP consists of five sections: (a) current assessment data, (b) objective statements, (c) strengths, (d) anticipated effects, and (e) educational needs.

This section of the IEP also includes a special factor section that may be important to developing a comprehensive transition IEP. Also on this page is a "parent concern" box where parental concerns for enhancing transition education services and outcomes need to be noted. The role each section plays in transition planning is described below and examples are provided.

Current Assessment Data Section

The results from the transition assessments will be summarized in the Current Assessment Data Section and provide an indication of student progress toward reaching his or her postsecondary goals. As much as possible, the included information needs to be measurable and factual, and "self-explanatory and readily interpreted by participants without the use of test manuals" (First Year Special Education Teacher Handbook, 2009, p. 14). To facilitate understanding and decision making, transition assessment results need to be included "in a language and form that parent(s) and young adults understand" (Oklahoma Amended Policies and Procedures for Special Education, 2010, p. 159). The following example summarizes the results of a commonly used self-determination assessment.

Example Current Assessment Statement

Bill obtained an overall 48% self-determination score as measured on the AIR Self-Determination Scale, Educator Version.

Objective Statements Section

Objective statements based upon the results of the transition assessments will be written describing how the student's disability impacts involvement in post-secondary transition instructional activities relating to attainment of postsecondary goals. The following example depicts how this is done using the results of a self-determination assessment.

Example Objective Statement

Bill has about half of the overall self-determination skills measured on this assessment. He has many more opportunities at home to develop and use his self-determination skills than at school. He needs increased school and home opportunities to develop and master additional self-determination skills to enable him to attain his post-school education and employment goals.

Strengths Section

Strengths gleaned from the transition assessments will be listed in the Strengths box. Identify strengths that will facilitate success in transition education activities and in attaining annual transition goals.

Example Strengths Statement
Bill knows his own ability and limitations and can express these at the appropriate times. He can also set short-term goals and can change his plan as needed to attain his short-term goals.

Anticipated Effects Section
Describe the impact of identified transition strengths on participation in transition education activities and attainment of annual transition goals.

Example Anticipated Effect Statement
Bill's self-advocacy skills will enable him to request testing accommodations if they are not automatically provided in his general education classes.

Educational Needs Section
List transition educational needs that may require special education, related services, aids, supports, modifications, or accommodations. Needs identified from the transition assessment process will be listed in the Educational Needs box and considered in developing annual transition goals. Needs include skills that transition assessments identified as not yet mastered. Educational needs that may require certain services, such as transportation to and from a work-study site, must be included. Educational needs are those that may require special education, related services, and supports.

Example Educational Needs Statements
Bill needs additional opportunities at home and school to learn and practice self-determination skills.

Consideration of Special Factors Section
Check "yes" or "no" to indicate if any of the following factors may be relevant to student involvement in transition education efforts to attain annual transition goals:
• strategies and supports for managing student misbehavior
• limited English proficiency
• use of Braille
• communication needs due to being deaf or hard of hearing
• assistive technology from low level pencil grips to Augmentative Communication Devices

If any are marked "yes" in the IEP document, explain why it is an issue for transition education and if special education services are needed.

Sample Special Consideration Factor Explanation
A student who is hard of hearing is involved in a work-study experience at a community job site. To be able to clearly hear co-workers instructions and comments, the co-worker will need to use an FM transmitter.

Parent Concerns for Enhancing the Child's Education Section
As transition education issues are being discussed, identify any specific concerns that parents have about enhancing transition education services and opportunities. It is best practice not to leave this section blank. Parents' transition education concerns need to be considered when developing annual transition goals and coordinated activities.

Example Parent Concern
Mom wants to ensure that Bill identifies a career interest so that plans can be made for him to acquire the education and experience needed to obtain a job that pays a living wage and has benefits.

BEST PRACTICE HINTS

Recent research found that active student involvement in the IEP process is related to improved rates of employment and involvement in postsecondary education after high school graduation. The *I'm Determined* project (http://www.imdetermined.org/), sponsored by the Virginia Department of Education, offers systematic lessons to teach students to play a role in writing and then presenting their Present Levels of Performance page at their IEP meeting. This web site is becoming a major transition education resource site for teachers across the country.

Remember: Transition assessments should be described in ways that can be readily interpreted by participants without the use of test manuals.

Sample IEP Transition Sections
The next two pages provide example sections of the Oklahoma IEP transition pages. Read through these to see where to write transition information.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)

NAME OF CHILD: _____ STUDENT ID: _____
FIRST/MIDDLE/LAST

BIRTHDATE: _____ GRADE: _____ AGE: _____
MONTH/DAY/YEAR

PARENT(S): _____

PHONE: _____
WORK HOME OTHER

HOME ADDRESS: _____ DISTRICT/AGENCY: _____
STREET/P.O. BOX CITY STATE ZIP

BUILDING: _____ SITE CODE: _____ IEP TEACHER OF RECORD: _____

☐ INITIAL IEP: ☐ INTERIIM IEP: ☐ SUBSEQUENT IEP: DATE AMENDED OR MODIFIED: _____

Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Educational Performance: Document current evaluation data and write objective statements, (may include most recent statewide and districtwide) to demonstrate how the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum and postsecondary transition, as appropriate. For students of transition age, document transition assessment results as they relate to the postsecondary goal(s). For preschool children, describe how the disability affects the child's participation in age appropriate activities.

Current Assessment Data

Example: Bill obtained an overall 48% self-determination score as measured on the AIR Self-Determination Scale. Educator Version.

Remember: Transition assessments should be described in a way that can be readily interpreted by IEP participants without the use of test manuals.

Objective Statements

Example: Bill has about half of the overall self-determination skills measured on this assessment. He has many more opportunities at home to develop and use his self-determination skills than at school. He needs increased school and home opportumities to develop and master additional self-determination skills to enable him to attain his post-school education and employment goals.

Objective Statements need to describe how the information gained from the transition assessments may impact attainment of the postsecondary goals.

NAME OF CHILD: STUDENT ID:

FIRST/MIDDLE/LAST

List **strengths of the child** and a statement of the **anticipated effects** on the child's participation in the general education curriculum or appropriate activities.

Strengths:
Example: Bill knows own ability and limitations and can express these at the appropriate times. He can also set short-term goals, and can change his plan as needed to attain his short-term goals.

Describe strengths identified from transition assessments.

Anticipated Effects:
Example: Bill's self-advocacy skills will enable him to request testing accommodations if they are not automatically provided in his general education classes.

What impact will the strengths have on participation in transition activities and goal attainment?

List the **educational needs** resulting from the child's disability, which may require special education, related services, supplementary aids, supports for personnel, or modifications.

Example: Bill needs additional opportunities at home and school to learn and practice self-determination skills.

Based on the results of transition assessments, what skills need to be mastered? Are related services needed to attain postsecondary goals or to participate in transition activities?

Consideration of special factors: Check yes or no whether the IEP team considers each special factor to be relevant to this child.

☐ YES ☐ NO Strategies, positive behavior interventions and supports, as appropriate, if behavior impedes learning of self or others

☐ YES ☐ NO Language needs as related to the IEP for a child with limited English proficienc (LEP)

☐ YES ☐ NO Instruction and use of Braille if child is blind or visually impaired, unless determined inappropriate based on evaluation

☐ YES ☐ NO Communication needs, and for child who is deaf or hard of hearing, the language and communication needs and opportunities for communication and instruction in the child's native language and communication mode

☐ YES ☐ NO Whether this child requires assistive technology devices and service

For special factors checked yes, explain determinations of the team as to whether services are required in the IEP.
Example for a student who is hard of hearing is involved in a work-study experience at a community job site:

To be able to clearly hear co-workers instructions and comments, the co-worker will need to use an FM transmitter.

Parent Concerns for Enhancing the Child's Education:
Example: Mom wants to ensure that Bill identifies a career interest so that plans can be made for him to obtain the education and experience needed to obtain a job that pays a living wage and has benefits.

Include parent concerns for life after high school.

❻ Transition Services Plan: Postsecondary Goals

Postsecondary goals set the direction of the secondary IEP because they represent what students want to attain after completing high school. Transition components in the IEP need to align to support students attaining their postsecondary goals. Annual transition goals address transition needs and lead to the attainment of postsecondary goals. The Course of Study details the classes where students will learn the knowledge and skills needed to attain their postsecondary goals. Transition assessment results facilitate students answering questions to develop their postsecondary goals.

Postsecondary Goal Questions That Students Need to Answer

After discussing transition assessment results with their teachers and family, students need to annually answer three questions to develop postsecondary goals. Answers to these questions will most likely change over the years as students learn and refine their interests, skills, and limits. The three questions are:

1. Where do I want to live after completing high school?
2. What type of work do I want to do after completing high school?
3. How do I want to learn to do my job after completing high school?

Annual answers to these three questions will provide the information needed to complete the Postsecondary Goals section of the IEP.

Postsecondary Goals Requirements

Postsecondary goals need to be updated annually. The postsecondary goals *must address* further education and employment after high school. An independent living postsecondary goal is optional and developed only if the IEP team believes the student needs to acquire skills while in school to live where and how the student would like to live. Transition assessment results need to be considered when the postsecondary goals are being developed.

When postsecondary goals are discussed at the IEP meetings, the student must be invited to attend. If the child decides not to attend his or her meeting, educators must ensure that the student's interests are considered in developing postsecondary goals.

Students taught to alternative standards (using the CARG-A assessment) must have and Independent Living Goal.

Compliance Hint: If the postsecondary goal answers the questions "Where will the student work, learn, and live (as needed)?" then it is in compliance.

Suggestion: Include Independent Living Within the Postsecondary Goal Statement

All students will live somewhere after graduation, so a best practice suggestion includes describing in the postsecondary goal where that will be. Specifying a planned living location begins the dialogue between students, family members, and educators, and opens the door to determining if students need to learn specific independent living skills and make necessary community connections. Independent living skill assessments, such as Casey Life Skills, are easy for many students to complete and identify skills, strengths, and needs. Through annual independent living goals, independent living skills can then be addressed. At a minimum, best practice suggests presenting the results of an independent living assessment at each annual IEP meeting to begin the discussion of skills the student may need to live where he or she plans after graduation.

Example Postsecondary Goals

Typically, Oklahoma teachers write combined postsecondary goals that merge further education and employment into one statement. In fact, the structure of the Oklahoma IEP form encourages writing combined postsecondary goals. One approach to writing postsecondary goals is to begin each goal with the phrase, "After graduating from high school . . ." The following examples demonstrate how to write postsecondary goals:

Combined Further Education (Technology Center) and Employment Postsecondary Goal Example

After graduating from high school, Larry will attend the dental assistant program at Moore-Norman Technology Center and then work at a dentist's office in the Oklahoma City Metro area.

Compliance Check Questions

Where will the student work? *At the dentist's office*
Where will the student learn? *Moore-Norman Technology Center*

Combined Further Education (on-the-job training) and Employment Postsecondary Goal Example
After graduating from high school, Carlee will learn how to be a meat cutter through on-the-job training while working in the meat department at a local grocery store.

Compliance Check Questions
Where will the student work? *At the grocery store*
Where will the student learn? *Through on-the-job training at the grocery store*

Combined Further Education, Independent Living, and Employment Postsecondary Goal Example
After graduation from high school, Juan will live in the student dorm while attending East Central University to become a middle school special education teacher.

Compliance Check Questions
Where will the student work? *Middle school*
Where will the student learn? *East Central University*
Where will the student live? *Student dorm*

Combined Further Education, Independent Living, and Employment Postsecondary Goal Example for Students with Severe and Multiple Disabilities
After graduation from high school, John will live at home with his parents and with the support and training of a job coach, he will develop and operate a home-based balloon business.

Compliance Check Questions
Where will the student work? *At home-based balloon business*
Where will the student learn? *At home-based balloon business with support from job coach*
Where will the student live? *At parents' home*

Will Schools be Responsible If Students Do Not Attain Their Postsecondary Goals?
No, the schools and educators will not be held accountable if students do not attain their postsecondary goals. Many factors determine if postsecondary goals can be attained, and many of them are beyond the ability of educators to influence. This includes the job market and student decision-making. Postsecondary goals simply provide a target that students prepare to meet while in high school. Postsecondary goals often change from year-to-year, and after graduating from high school the goal may change again.

Example Postsecondary Goal From the Oklahoma IEP Page
The sample below depicts where and how to write the postsecondary goal on an Oklahoma IEP form.

IEP – Transition Services Plan – Goals and Activities Page

(Beginning not later than the first IEP developed during the student's ninth grade year or upon turning 16 years of age, whichever occurs first)

NAME OF CHILD: STUDENT ID:
FIRST/MIDDLE/LAST

Postsecondary Goal(s):
Example: After graduating from high school, Larry will attend the dental assistant program at Moore-Norman Technology Center and then will work at a dentist's office in the Oklahoma City metro area.

Annual Transition Goals:
Provide measurable annual tranistion goals to assist the young adult in working toward their postsecondary goal(s). The annual transition goal(s) must include academic and functional goals to enable the young adult to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum and in community experiences. For a young adult beginning with the first IEP during the ninth grade year or upon turning 16 years of age, whichever occurs first, postsecondary goal(s) based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to education/training, employment, and where appropriate, independent living skills, and to meet other educational needs that result from the disability. **For young adults being taught to alternate achievement of the standards, include a minimum of two (2) short-term objectives or benchmarks for each annual goal.**

Education/Training Goal(s)	Short-Term Objectives/Benchmarks (as needed)

Postsecondary Goals occur after high school and answer the questions: Where will the student work, learn, and live (as needed)?

Coordinated Activities

❼ Transition Services Plan: Annual Transition Goals

Annual measurable transition goals align with specific postsecondary goals and identify what students need to learn to attain their postsecondary goals. Thus, an annual employment goal represents a "chunk" of what a student needs to learn to attain his or her postsecondary employment, education, and living goals. Annual transition goals are developed based upon identified transition needs and mediated by student interests, skills, and limits identified through the transition assessment process. At least one annual transition goal needs to be included in the IEP for each postsecondary goal. Annual goals are not mere statements of passing a class with a certain grade or even enrolling in a class. Annual goals are about skills that students will learn and master throughout the year.

Required Annual Transition Goals

There must be least one annual employment transition goal and one annual education/training goal. Both must align with the corresponding postsecondary goal. The annual employment goal, for instance, aligns with postsecondary employment and represents a logical next step of what the student needs to learn to eventually attain the postsecondary goal.

If a postsecondary independent living goal is written into the postsecondary goals section of the IEP, an annual independent living goal must be included as well.

Annual Transition Goal Questions That Students Need to Answer

Students need to annually answer, with support from their educators and family, three questions after understanding the results of transition assessments to build their annual transition goals. The three questions are:

1. What do I need to learn now to live where I want after graduating from high school?
2. What do I need to learn now to do the job I want after graduating from high school?
3. What do I need to learn now to be able to succeed in an educational program after graduating from high school?

Writing Annual Transition Goals

Annual transition goals describe what the student will learn within an academic year to show movement toward attaining a postsecondary goal. Each annual goal consists of three crucial components:

- *Conditions:* the materials and environment necessary for the goal to be completed
- *Behavior:* the action that can be directly observed and monitored
- *Criterion:* how much, how often, or to what extent the behavior must occur to demonstrate that it has been achieved.

Sample Annual Transition Goals

- Penny will verbally describe to the class 5 possible Army occupations that match her skills and interests after taking the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) and studying the results.
- Given instruction in high school Financial Planning class, Chauncey will balance a personal household budget including car payment, fuel, insurance, rent, food, entertainment expenses with 100% accuracy.
- John will report to the class the results of his interview of at least three owners or managers of car repair shops to determine the skills and requirements to be a beginning car mechanic and identify the working conditions and job possibilities using the "job interview profile tool."

Students Being Taught to Alternative Achievement Standards

For students who are being taught to alternative standards, at least two short-term objectives or benchmarks must written for each annual transition goal. These will provide intermediate learning targets that students need to achieve along the way to attain the annual transition goal.

Example Postsecondary Employment Goal

After completing high school, John will live at home with his parents. With the support and training of a job coach, he will develop and operate a home-based balloon business.

Example Annual Transition Goal

John will participate in on-the-job training at Party Galaxy to learn how to properly inflate 30 balloons with 100% accuracy for three consecutive trials.

Example Short-Term Objectives or Benchmarks (at least two objectives are required)

While completing an on-the-job training at Party Galaxy, John will correctly attach 50 balloons onto

the inflator with 100% accuracy.
While completing on-the-job training at Party Galaxy, John will inflate 50 balloons for 3 to 5 seconds, remove them from the inflator, and tie the balloon with a ribbon.

Quiz: What Makes an Annual Transition Goal Measurable?
The number that quantifies how often, how accurate, or the extent that the behavior is completed.

Coordinated Activities
Coordinated activities are tasks or activities that students will complete to learn the skill or knowledge associated with the annual goal. These activities may take place in the school, home, or community setting. There must be at least two activities per annual goal. Consider all activities that the student might benefit from or participate in to achieve the goal (e.g., if the student is a client of the Department of Rehabilitation Services and participating in School Work Study, you can indicate that as the activity—paid work experience).

Responsible Party
Beside each coordinated activity, indicate the person responsible for facilitating completion of the activity. The person may include general education teachers, parents, other family members, co-workers, friends, or others involved in assisting students to attain their transition goals. The DRS counselor may often be written in as the responsible party for the services provided to his or her clients. Oftentimes, the counselor will help arrange a vocational evaluation or even provide job readiness trainings for students.

Example Coordinated Activities
Annual Transition Goal: Given instruction in high school Financial Planning class, Chauncey will balance a personal household budget including car payment, fuel, insurance, rent, food, and entertainment expenses with 100% accuracy.

Coordinated Activity	Responsible Party
Opening a checking account at a neighborhood Bank	Mother
Writing checks to pay hypothetical household bills	Special Education Teacher
Balancing the checking account by recording amount of check and payee into an I-phone app.	Student

Parents Informed of Progress Toward Attaining Annual Transition Goals
Parents need to be told how their students are progressing. In each transition goal box, describe how progress is being measured and the progress students are making in attaining their annual transition goals. The "how" could include a work product, observation of performance, or by using an assessment tool. Use numerical figures, such as percent or number achieved to describe how well the student is progressing.

Parents need to know about progress toward attaining annual transition goals at least as often as parents of nondisabled children are provided progress reports. If report cards are distributed to parents quarterly, then progress on goal attainment must be distributed quarterly.

Extent of Progress
This box is completed showing when parents will be notified of progress made toward achieving the annual transition goal. Add the date that notification will be sent to parents. Note: not all date boxes need to be completed, but the range of dates need to span a year and need to correspond to at least how often parents of students who are not disabled are notified of progress. The measure should be entered below the listed notification dates. As noted on the sample IEP, write the progress measure with a brief explanation. Many educators simply copy and send the IEP annual transition goal page to parents with the progress field completed.

QUIZ: What is the Difference Between a Postsecondary and an Annual Transition Goal?
Postsecondary goals occur after students graduate from high school. Annual transition goals occur while students are still in high school.

Transition Planning and General Standards
Transition planning and education can be incorporated into general curriculum and annual goals can be aligned with PASS and Common Core Standards. Addressing transition needs through core curriculum is a way to teach transition education skills while preparing students for end-of-instruction achievement tests. Educators can infuse transition related content through essays, reports, and stories into English standards to simultaneously prepare students for chosen careers while teaching required achievement skills.

Example Transition Goals Aligned with PASS
Language Arts Grade 12 PASS
Writing/grammar/ mechanics and usage. The student will express ideas effectively in written modes for a variety of purposes and audiences.
Standard 1: Writing Process - The student will use the writing process to write coherently.
2. Use elaboration to develop an idea:
a. draft a text with a clear, controlling idea or thesis
b. develop a coherent progression of ideas applying organizational strategies such as spatial, chronological, order of importance, compare/contrast, logical order, cause/effect, or classification/division.
c. apply different methods of support, such as facts, reasons, examples, sensory details, anecdotes, paraphrases, quotes, reflections, and dialogue.
d. apply a consistent and appropriate point of view, establish a credible voice, and create a suitable tone.
e. understand and apply formal and informal diction for a desired effect.

Example Annual Transition Goal
Emily will write an essay to compare and contrast two careers in the field of computer technology and include salary, benefits and required educational training, and describe which career is better suited for her strengths and abilities with 85% accuracy.

Financial Literacy Passport PASS
Standard 4: The student will demonstrate the ability to balance a checkbook and reconcile financial accounts.

Example Annual Transition Goal
Given instruction in high school Financial Literacy class, Tyler will demonstrate balancing and reconciling a personal household budget and checkbook to include car payment, fuel, insurance, and monthly expenditures with 100% accuracy.

Example Annual Transition Goals
Aligned with Common Core Standards
Common Core English Language Arts Standards » Writing » Grade 11-12
W.11-12.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
• Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
• Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
• Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
• Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.
• Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
• Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

Example Annual Transition Goal
Cara will research required skills for a chosen profession, then compose a cover letter to a future employer describing her skills relevant to the desired position and reasons she should be chosen for the job with 90% accuracy.

Common Core English Language Arts Standards » History/Social Studies » Grades 9-10
RH.9-10.6. Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

Example Annual Transition Goal
Walker will research and write a report concerning the past treatment of persons with disabilities and include perspectives of individuals with disabilities, employers, and family members of individuals with disabilities and describe how this treatment led to laws such as IDEA and ADA with 95% accuracy.

Sample IEP Sections
At right are examples of how the concepts apply to the Oklahoma IEP pages.

IEP – Transition Services Plan – Goals and Activities Page

(Beginning not later than the first IEP developed during the student's ninth grade year or upon turning 16 years of age, whichever occurs first)

NAME OF CHILD: STUDENT ID:

FIRST/MIDDLE/LAST

Postsecondary Goal(s):

Example: Penny will join the U.S. Army and receive on-the-job training in a military occupation. She plans to live on base.

Annual Transition Goals:

Provide measurable annual tranistion goals to assist the young adult in working toward their postsecondary goal(s). The annual transition goal(s) must include academic and functional goals to enable the young adult to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum and in community experiences. For a young adult beginning with the first IEP during the ninth grade year or upon turning 16 years of age, whichever occurs first, postsecondary goal(s) based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to education/training, employment, and where appropriate, independent living skills, and to meet other educational needs that result from the disability. **For young adults being taught to alternate achievement of the standards, include a minimum of two (2) short-term objectives or benchmarks for each annual goal.**

Education/Training Goal(s)

After instruction, Penny will increase self-determination sk
measured by the Self-Directed IEP assessment, from 20% to 50%
by reviewing past goals and performance, stating her school and transition goals, and asking for feedback at her next IEP meeting.

This student will need a diploma to enter the military. Self-determination skills can teach the student to ask for accommodations and articulate needs for school success.

Coordinated Activities

Conduct a mock IEP meeting
Make a powerpoint displaying her strengths, needs, and interests

Responsible Party(ies)

Student and Special Education Teacher Student

Parents are to be informed of progress in annual goals, in addition to general education academic performance reports. Describe **how often** this will occur and **what methods** will be utilized.

Progress Report
9 weeks

How will the extent of progress toward annual goals be measured?

Demonstration/Performance

Extent of progress toward achieving the annual transition goals by the end of the year (i.e., one-half, two-thirds, fifty percent, passing grades in general curriculum).

DATE	DATE	DATE	DATE	DATE (ESY)
10/18/13	12/19/13			
25% (Penny is working on PowerPoint)	50% (Penny led a mock IEP meeting)			

Employment Goal(s)

Example: Penny will verbally describe to the class 5 possible Army occupations that match her skills and interests after taking the ASVAB and studying the results.

Short-Term Objectives/Benchmarks (as needed)

Student and Career Exploration teacher

This annual goal allows the student to explore occupations while in school to facilitate a transition into the military. The number "5" ensures that this annual goal is measurable.

Coordinated Activities

Take an online practice ASVAB
Interview an Army recruiter

Parents are to be informed of progress in annual goals, in addition to general education academic performance reports. Describe **how often** this will occur and **what methods** will be utilized.

Progress Report
9 weeks

How will the extent of progress toward annual goals be measured?

Demonstration/Performance

Extent of progress toward achieving the annual transition goals by the end of the year (i.e., one-half, two-thirds, fifty percent, passing grades in general curriculum).

DATE	DATE	DATE	DATE	DATE (ESY)
10/18/13	12/19/13			
1/4 (Penny completed ASVAB)	1/2 (Penny is researching Army occupations)			

IEP – Transition Services Plan – Goals and Activities Page

(Beginning not later than the first IEP developed during the student's ninth grade year or upon turning 16 years of age, whichever occurs first)

NAME OF CHILD: _____ STUDENT ID: _____

FIRST/MIDDLE/LAST

Independent Living Goal(s) (if appropriate)	**Short-Term Objectives/Benchmarks (as needed)**
Given instruction in high school Financial Planning class. Penny will balance a personal household budget including car payment, fuel, insurance, food, entertainment expenses with 100% accuracy.	
Coordinated Activities Visit an Army Base Open a checking account	**Responsible Party(ies)** Student Parent

Parents are to be informed of progress in annual goals, in addition to general education academic performance reports. Describe **how often** this will occur and **what methods** will be utilized.

Progress Report
9 weeks

How will the extent of progress toward annual goals be measured?
Grades
Performance-Based Assessments

Extent of progress toward achieving the annual transition goals by the end of the year (i.e., one-half, two-thirds, fifty percent, passing grades in general curriculum).

DATE	DATE	DATE	DATE	DATE (ESY)
10/18/13	12/18/13			
0% (Financial Planning begins $2)	0% (Financial Planning begins $2)			

Build a course of study, to be updated annually, to assist the young adult in achieving the postsecondary goal(s):

Grade 9	**Grade** 10	**Grade** 11
English I	English II	English III
Earth Science	Biology	Anatomy
Algebra I	Algebra II	Geometry
OK History/Geography	World History/Geography	US History
Spanish I	Financial Literacy	First Aide
JROTC	JROTC	JROTC
Grade 9	**Grade** _____	**Projected date of graduation/program completion and type:**
English IV		May 23, 2015
Computer Science		☑ Standard Diploma
Family and Consumer Science		☐ General Education Development (GED)
Physical Education		☐ Other _____
Cross Country		
JROTC		

Consider courses that will teach skills needed for the student's chosen postsecondary goals.

In planning the course of study, is information needed regarding opportunities for vocational education (e.g., high school vocational education courses, school-based training, work study programs, technology education, or area career technology center programs)?

☑ YES ☐ NO

If yes, document date(s) when information was provided to young adult and parent(s). Date: 9/13/13

By age 16, the young adult has been referred to the vocational rehabilitation counselor in the young adult's school district. ☑ YES ☐ NO

Person responsible for the referral: Melissa Coyle Date: 9/23/13

Name o the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor: Robert King

Have the young adult and parent(s) been provided a copy of the referral form?. ☑ YES ☐ NO

If no, explain why: _____

If yes, explain how: A copy of DRS referral form was mailed to parents on 9/23/13

By age 17, have young adult and parent(s) been informed of any transfer of rights at age of majority? ☑ YES ☐ NO

If no, explain why: _____

Comments:

❽ Transition Services Plan: The Course of Study

The course of study lists courses by academic grade that will lead to students completing high school and attaining postsecondary goals. It is updated annually and if the postsecondary goals change, so may the course of study.

Writing the Course of Study

The course of study must include specific course names, such as Algebra I, English I, or American History, and not simply the general core area such as Social Studies or the word "electives." For students who attend a CareerTech Center, the course of study must list the specific CareerTech courses (e.g., Welding I) and the academic grade (e.g., 9th, 10th) that it will be taken.

In developing the course of study, the IEP team should consider the entry requirements of postsecondary educational programs and include courses that meet the entry-level requirements. The same applies to scholarship opportunities, such as the Oklahoma Promise Scholarship, which requires that students complete a college track sequence of courses. This is one reason transition planning may start in middle school to ensure that students who are college bound enroll in classes to prepare for the college track sequence that they will experience during high school. To the best of your ability, course of study should help prepare students for achieving their post-school goals. If a student wants to be a computer programmer, courses taken in high school should reflect that and prepare him or her for that career area (e.g., Keyboarding, Computer Applications, Web Design).

Continuing High School Through Age 21

Students may receive their high school education through the age of 21 (i.e., until they turn 22 years of age) if extra time is needed to complete the secondary education program designed by the IEP team. If extra time is needed, build the course of study to depict the courses by grade year up to the expected completion date. It is best to build the extended Course of Study as early as possible to demonstrate the long-term intent of extending secondary education through the age of 21. The IEP team must decide in advance if services will cease upon the 22nd birthday or at the end of that school year so that appropriate linkages and plans will be in place upon completion.

Exit IEP Meeting Prior to Graduation or Completing High School

The IEP team should meet prior to the student's high school completion date to ensure that graduation requirements will be met in accordance with general education curriculum requirements or "as otherwise specified in the IEP" (Amended Policies and Procedures for Special Education in Oklahoma, 2010, p. 132).

❾ Transition Services Plan: Graduation Date and Type of Diploma

The projected date of graduation box is a small, but very important part of the Transition Services Plan page. IEP teams need to give thoughtful consideration to decide the completion date and make certain the Course of Study sequence of courses by academic grade matches the completion date. To earn a high school diploma, a student must earn all required credits for graduation.

Projected Date: Writing Month and Year

Enter the month and year that the student will most likely complete his or her secondary education program. This should be completed annually and discussed as an IEP team.

If the IEP team decides the student will continue to receive secondary education through the school year the student turns 22, the ending "age-out" month and year needs to be noted. This decision needs to be carefully thought out and discussed at each transition IEP meeting. The "age-out" date needs to be added to the Transition Services Plan as early as the IEP team can decide that the student will need additional years to complete his or her secondary education program. If "age-out" is the method to complete secondary education, make certain the course of study includes a listing of specific classes the student will complete during the additional school years.

Type of Program Completion

Three options exist on the Oklahoma IEP: standard diploma, general education development (GED) diploma, or aging out. If the student plans to obtain a standard diploma or a GED, mark the appropriate box. If the student will "age-out," check "Other" and write "age-out" on the provided line.

Special Education Eligibility Ends
Once a student graduates with a standard diploma, or ages out, the student is no longer eligible to receive special education and related services, and cannot reenroll in public school. If a student dropped out and/or earned a GED, he or she may continue to enroll in the public school and is eligible to receive special education through his or her 21st year.

⑩ Transition Services Plan: Providing Vocational Education Information

Oklahoma has one of the best, if not the best, Career and Technology system in the nation, and it represents a major vocational education access point for students with disabilities. But, other vocational educational options exist, and many of them are unique to programs and partnerships established by specific school districts and community vocational providers. These options include:

• Work study, which may be supported by Oklahoma's Department of Rehabilitation Services, and may require that an application be submitted to DRS and approved by the DRS counselor;

• Work adjustment, which may be supported by Oklahoma's Department of Rehabilitation Services, and may require that an application be submitted to DRS and approved by the DRS counselor;

• Community-based job experience programs; and

• High school vocational education classes (may meet at high school or Career Tech center).

Due to the fact that options may be unique to particular schools and districts, educators within each school need to explain to students and families available vocational education options. As appropriate, the discussion should include admission requirements and dates applications are due.

Note: If needed vocational education options do not exist, work with your special education director, DRS counselor, and others to create needed programs.

To Complete Vocational Education Section
Check "yes," if a detailed discussion has taken place with the student and family concerning available vocational education options. Then, enter the date this conversation took place. Check "no," if this conversation has not yet taken place.

Why This Section
As students begin to approach the end of their secondary education, the type and availability of services move from being available to optional. Vocational education programs may not accept all students who apply into their program, and, in fact, some are very selective. Specific Career and Technology programs, for instance, require advanced math classes, an excellent record of high school attendance, and a lack of discipline issues. Others, such as those done in cooperation with Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services, may have age, disability specific, and other requirements. To understand the range of options, educators need to have detailed conversations with parents prior to admission due dates. Due to the time sensitive nature of some applications, the date that the conversation took place must be recorded on the IEP. It is the responsibility of special educators to have this conversation with parents and students prior to application due dates.

Recent Research Results
Research has found a strong association between students with disabilities who have had a paid job during their high school years (during the summer or after school and on weekends), and enrollment in higher education (i.e., two or four year college) and being employed after graduating from high school. Vocational education programs that did not result in a paid job for students during their high school years did not have this strong association.

⓫ Transition Services Plan: Oklahoma DRS Referral

Oklahoma's Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) provides numerous transition services to students with disabilities as they transition from high school into the adult world. To access DRS supports, an application must be submitted, and the youth with disabilities needs to be found eligible by DRS.

Department of Rehabilitation Services IEP Section
Because DRS transition services can be so important to students' post-school success, special educators must complete a DRS Referral form and submit it to the local DRS Counselor. This process requires more than simply a paper form that is completed. Educators need to discuss with parents and students the range of services that may be available from DRS, and parents should be encouraged to complete the application. The referral form is not an application form. It merely notifies the DRS counselor of a potential client. Once received, the DRS counselor then contacts the student and family to discuss services and the option to apply.

When To Complete the DRS Referral Form
Generally, the DRS Referral form is completed during the academic year that the student is 15 years of age and prior to him or her turning 16. The referral form can be found on SEAS under "Referral for Vocational Rehabilitation." Each DRS counselor also has copies available.

Completing the DRS Referral Form
To complete this section, simply mark "yes" or "no" to indicate if the DRS Referral form has been completed and submitted. Implied is that a discussion took place between the special educators, parents, and students about DRS Services. The name of the local DRS Counselor is entered to facilitate later parental and/or student contact. Best practice suggests that the DRS Office phone number also be included beside the counselor's name.

Indicate "yes" if a copy of the DRS Referral form was provided to the parents and students. If not, indicate "no." Explain how the family and student received a copy of the referral form. A possible response could be: "During a discussion about DRS services and the DRS application process."

Remember: The Referral Form DOES NOT Make the Student Eligible for DRS Services
The DRS Referral form provides an opportunity to engage family members and students in a conversation about DRS Services, and how they may facilitate students' transition from school to life after graduating from high school. The Referral form provides the DRS Counselor notice that a student may be contacting him or her to begin the application process. Encourage parents and students to make an appointment with the DRS counselor to complete the application. Some DRS counselors may even provide applications to teachers to hand out to interested parents. The application may also be found online at http://www.okdrs.gov.

BEST PRACTICE HINTS

Working with an Oklahoma DRS Counselor
Many Oklahoma DRS Counselors serve students with disabilities in several high schools across a large geographic area. Common caseloads often exceed 250 to 300 clients. Thus, DRS Counselors cannot attend all transition IEP meetings that they are invited to attend. To establish a working relationship with students and educators, consider inviting a local DRS Counselor into your school to speak with students about DRS services. This will enable the counselor to become familiar with the students and enable students to learn the "must attend" IEP meetings. Also, invite the DRS Counselor to attend a parent night so he or she can meet students' parents and tell them about DRS Services.
After the DRS referral has been submitted, students and parents may visit with the DRS counselor to complete an application for services. Encourage your students and parents to complete the application process, because without submitting an application to the DRS counselor, DRS services cannot be provided.

Consent Needed Prior to Sending DRS Referral Form
For students17 years old or younger, parents will need to sign a consent form allowing the DRS counselor to receive information about their sons or daughters. This consent form can be found at the SEAS website under "Optional OSDE Forms." Students who are 18 years old or older may sign the consent form as long as a judge has not removed their right to do so.

Sample DRS Referral Form
Attached is the DRS Referral form that can be found at the SEAS website.

OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION SERVICES

REFERRAL TO THE OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION SERVICES (DRS) FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND VISUAL SERVICES

NAME OF STUDENT: _____ STUDENT ID: _____
FIRST/MIDDLE/LAST

BIRTHDATE: _____ GENDER: _____ GRADE: _____ AGE: _____
MONTH/DAY/YEAR

PRIMARY LANGUAGE SPOKEN IN HOME?: _____

PARENT(S): _____

DISTRICT/AGENCY: _____ SCHOOL: _____

PHONE: _____
WORK HOME OTHER

ADDRESS: _____
STREET/P.O. BOX CITY STATE ZIP

CONSENT FOR RELEASE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION needs to be completed and signed by the parent/guardian (or student if age 18 or older) prior to releasing this information in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This referral form and a signed consent for release will be maintained in the student's special education records.

DISABILITY (IES): _____

NAME OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER: _____

PHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____

Please note: A release of confidential information (Under "Optional OSDE Forms" in SEAS) is needed prior to releasing information to DRS.

NAME OF SCHOOL COUNSELOR: _____

PHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____

_____
SIGNATURE OF PERSON MAKING REFERRAL DATE

DRS VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND VISUAL SERVICES COUNSELOR USE ONLY

DATE CONTACTED: _____

METHOD OF COMMUNICATION: ☐ PHONE ☐ US MAIL ☐ E-MAIL ☐ IN PERSON ☐ OTHER _____

⓬ Transition Services Plan: Transfer of Rights

Oklahoma's age of majority is 18 years of age. At 18, students with disabilities have all the rights of any United States citizen, and *most of the educational legal rights previously held by parents on behalf of their son or daughter transfer to the student*. Special education law specifically indicates that students with disabilities and their parents need to be informed of the transfer of educational rights before students turn 18. In Oklahoma, students and parents need to be told about this transfer before students turn 17 years old to allow parents time to consider other options. Unless parents have gone to court to obtain an order to remove students' rights, educational rights transfer to the students when they turn 18 years old. According to the Amended Policy and Procedures for Special Education, when students turn 18 they may give legal consent on their own behalf.

Married Student 17 years Old or Younger
According to the Amended Policy and Procedures for Special Education, parental special education rights transfer to the student when he or she becomes legally married, even if the student is 17 years old or younger.

Role of Special Educator
Before students turn 17 years old, students need to be taught the educational rights that will transfer to them when they turn 18 years old. In addition, parents need to be told that most of their previous education rights will be transferred to their sons and daughters. Implied within this regulation is the concept that students learn the meaning of rights and the action they may take because of these rights, along with new responsibilities.

Partial Listing of Special Education Rights

Shared Parental and Student Rights When Students Turns 18
School districts send special education notices to both parents and students in their native language if either parents and/or students have limited English proficiency.

Educational Rights Transfer From Parents When Student Turns 18	Partial Listing of Educational Rights That Transfer to Students at Age 18
→	Students may call for the IEP team to convene to discuss items related to the IEP.
→	Students must be invited to attend their IEP meeting when it is held for any reason.
→	Students may decide whom additional to invite to their IEP meeting beyond the required IEP team.
→	Students may suggest to the IEP team changes or modifications to IEP goals and associated coordinated activities.
→	Students may suggest to the IEP team changes or modifications to any section of the Present Level of Performance or Transition Service Plan sections.
→	Students provide consent for continued eligibility (re-evaluation) assessment.
→	Students may revoke consent for the continued provision of special education and related services.
→	Students may inspect and review any educational records pertaining to them collected and used by the school.
→	Students may obtain a list of the types and locations of their educational records maintained or used by the school.
→	Students may request that information in educational records that is inaccurate or misleading be changed.
→	Schools need to inform students when personally identifiable records are no longer needed by the school.
→	Students may utilize mediation to resolve special education disagreements.
→	Students may file a written complaint within one year regarding special education violations.
→	Students' consent must be obtained to disclose personally identifiable information to parties other than official school employees.

⓭ Other Considerations and Best Practice Hints

Postsecondary Education Disability Services

Students who plan to attend a postsecondary education setting must self-disclose their disability to the disability service office to apply for services and to receive accommodations. Educators can prepare students to self-advocate while in high school by implementing aforementioned lesson packages, such as the *411 on Disability Disclosure and ME! Self-Awareness and Self-Advocacy* lesson packages. Postsecondary education disability services are not universal and not all schools, colleges, and vocational centers offer or allow the same accommodations, and support services differ from campus to campus.

Oklahoma's Chapter of AHEAD (Association on Higher Education and Disability, which represents of the disability service providers across the state working in higher education programs) provided several documents to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from high school to postsecondary education. Appendix I provides a guide that educators can use to prepare students for higher education. Appendix II details the rights and responsibilities of students with disabilities preparing for postsecondary education. Appendix III details information about aids and services for students with disabilities enrolled in postsecondary education programs. Educators preparing students to transition into postsecondary educational programs need to the information contained in these documents to fully prepare students for the transition into higher education. More information on these topics can be found at the OK-AHEAD web site (http://www.ok-ahead.org/) or at the national AHEAD web site (http://www.ahead.org/). At the national AHEAD website, educators may freely access the *Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability* (JPED) to gain additional useful information.

To prepare students to contact a disability service provider at a postsecondary educational setting, educators can have students' practice asking and answering the following questions.

Questions Often Asked by Disability Service Providers

1. Can you describe your disability?
2. What kinds of difficulties have you experienced in academic settings?
3. What are your strengths and weaknesses?
4. What type of accommodations or services did you receive in high school? Which were the most beneficial?
5. Have you used adaptive equipment in the past? If so, what types of equipment or software was useful to you?
6. Do you have current documentation of your disability from a psychologist, physician, speech pathologist, or other qualified professional?
7. Are you a client of the Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)?
8. Why do you want to go to college?

Questions Students May Ask Disability Service Providers at Educational Settings

1. What are the college admission requirements?
2. How do I contact the student disability office?
3. What services are available through the office, and how do I arrange for them?
4. What type of documentation is needed?
5. What are faculty members told about my disability and how do they learn about my accommodations?
6. What do I do if a faculty person doesn't want to provide accommodations?
7. Does the disability services office help with study, writing, test-taking skills, or time management?
8. Are tutors available through the disability services office? Are they professional or student tutors? Is there a charge?
9. Is academic advisement done through the disability services office or in coordination with my regular academic advisor?
10. What types of adaptive technology are available (e.g., computer software, closed captioning, TTY, FM system)?
11. How do I arrange for Books on Tape?
12. How accessible are the academic and residential buildings?
13. Does the college offer course waivers or substitutions (e.g., foreign language)?
14. Are remedial courses available?
15. Is there a support group for students with disabilities on campus?
16. What other types of support services are available (e.g., study skills center, personal counseling, career counseling)?

Transition Portfolio

Many educators have students create a transition portfolio that is continued throughout middle and high school. A transition portfolio can provide documentation of preparation for life after high school. Not all students desire to attend a postsecondary educational setting, and the transition portfolio should provide information that will benefit students who would like to seek direct employment and those who plan to attend college and other postsecondary educational settings. Some students have taken their transition portfolios to job fairs and used the forms completed in the classroom as examples to complete applications, W-4, and I-9 forms. Below is a partial list of possible items to include in a transition portfolio. Not all items need to be completed in one year. The first 10 could be completed during the student's freshman year, the next 10, during the sophomore year, etc.

Suggested Items for a Transition Portfolio

The contents of a transition portfolio will vary based on the ability level of the student for whom the portfolio is being created. The following items may be included in the portfolio.

- A list of the individual student's strengths and skills
- Contact information for local WorkForce Oklahoma site (www.careeronestop.org/ then location finder at bottom of page)
- Sample letter requesting services from a local provider
- Documentation of a visit to the local Career and Technology Center
- Personal statement describing the student and future goals
- Training site agreements or evaluations from work or training sites
- Documentation of job explorations that the student has completed
- Participation in extra-curricular activities in the school and community
- Documentation of having interviewed key persons who are employed in areas of interest to the student
- Documentation of job shadowing participation
- Completion of a job application
- Documentation of research on possible postsecondary programs that can assist the student after graduation
- Documentation of contact with the local Vocational Rehabilitation counselor
- Resume
- Spreadsheet of names, addresses, phone numbers, and email of local utility providers
- Copies of letters of recommendation from teachers, employers, and coaches
- Results of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB)
- ACT Scores
- Example FAFSA
- Oklahoma Promise Documentation
- Transcript
- List of the accommodations that the student has used to be successful
- Proof of valid driver's license or a photo i.d.
- Proof of registering to vote
- Proof of registering for selective service
- Any Health Records
- Insurance Provider information
- Completed W-4
- Completed I-9
- Letter of resignation
- Completion of an independent living skills questionnaire
- Documentation of volunteer work performed
- Completion of a pre-vocational checklist
- Summary of Performance

The Differences Between IDEA and ADA Amendments Act

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) ensures that school-aged children, pre-K through grade 12, receive a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. IDEA services do not carry over into postsecondary educational or employment settings. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) protects individuals with disabilities from discrimination in employment, state and local government activities, public transportation, public accommodations, and telecommunications and relay services. Students who are eligible for services under IDEA may not be protected by ADA.

	IDEA	ADA
Type of Statute	Law that provides a Free Appropriate Public Education for children with disabilities	Civil Rights statute that protects individuals with disabilities from discrimination
Who is Covered?	School-aged children who have a disability in one of 13 federally recognized categories that adversely affects educational performance	Individuals with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity
Delivery Method	Individualized Education Program (IEP)	No standard plan, case-by-case basis
Evaluation	Local educational agencies seek and evaluate students who may have a disability	Individuals are responsible for providing documentation of a disability and must self-identify themselves a person with a disability. Evaluation may be required at the cost of the individual.
Typical Services Available	• Supplemental Aides and Services • Speech and Language Therapy • Occupational Therapy • Counseling • Resource Room • Testing modifications • Adaptive Equipment	• Reasonable Accommodations • Interpreters • Note takers • Priority Registration • Recorded Lectures • Extended Test Time
Student Responsibilities	• Do his or her best	• Disability Disclosure • Provide disability documentation • Facilitate provision of reasonable accommodations • Appropriately use accommodations • Report when reasonable accommodations are refused

Adapted from deBettencourt, L. U. (2002). Understanding the differences between IDEA and Section 504, *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 34(3). p.16-23.

APPENDIX I

A GUIDE FOR HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATORS PREPARING STUDENTS TO TRANSITION TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Transition of Students With Disabilities To Postsecondary Education: A Guide for High School Educators

March 2007

INTRODUCTION

Do you know what is in store for students with disabilities who graduate from your school and head off to postsecondary education? Do you have the information you need to advise them on what to expect in postsecondary education?

For students with disabilities, a big factor in their successful transition from high school to postsecondary education is accurate knowledge about their civil rights. The purpose of this guide is to provide high school educators with answers to questions students with disabilities may have as they get ready to move to the postsecondary education environment.

This guide was developed by the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR). OCR has enforcement responsibilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), as amended, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Title II), which prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. Every school district and nearly every college and university in the United States is subject to one or both of these laws, which have similar requirements. Private postsecondary institutions that do not receive federal financial assistance are not subject to Section 504 or Title II. They are, however, subject to Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which is enforced by the U.S. Department of Justice and which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by private entities that are not private clubs or religious entities.

This guide also makes reference to Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which provides funds to states to assist in making a free appropriate public education (FAPE) available to eligible children with disabilities. IDEA requirements apply to state education agencies, school districts and other public agencies that serve IDEA-eligible children. Institutions of postsecondary education have no legal obligations under the IDEA.[1]

Similarly, this guide references the state Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Program, authorized by the Rehabilitation Act, which provides funds to state VR agencies to assist eligible individuals with disabilities in obtaining employment. State VR agencies provide a wide range of employment-related services, including services designed to facilitate the transition of eligible students with disabilities from school to post-school activities.[2]

In preparing this guide, we have highlighted the significant differences between the rights and responsibilities of students with disabilities in the high school setting and the rights and responsibilities these students will have once they are in the postsecondary education setting. Following a set of frequently asked questions, we have provided some practical suggestions that high school educators can share with students to facilitate their successful transition to postsecondary education.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The Admissions Process

1. Are students with disabilities entitled to changes in standardized testing conditions on entrance exams for institutions of postsecondary education?

It depends. In general, tests may not be selected or administered in a way that tests the disability rather than the achievement or aptitude of the individual.[3] In addition, federal law requires changes to the testing conditions that are necessary to allow a student with a disability to participate as long as the changes do not fundamentally alter the examination or create undue financial or administrative burdens.[4] Although some institutions of postsecondary education may have their own entrance exams, many use a student's score on commercially available tests. In general, in order to request one or more changes in standardized testing conditions, which test administrators may also refer to as "testing accommodations"[5], the student will need to contact the institution of postsecondary education or the entity that administers the exam and provide documentation of a disability and the need for a change in testing conditions. The issue of documentation is discussed below. Examples of changes in testing conditions that may be available include, but are not limited to:

- Braille;
- Large print;
- Fewer items on each page;
- Tape recorded responses;

• Responses on the test booklet;
• Frequent breaks;
• Extended testing time;
• Testing over several sessions;
• Small group setting;
• Private room;
• Preferential seating; and
• The use of a sign language interpreter for spoken directions.

2. Are institutions of postsecondary education permitted to ask an applicant if he or she has a disability before an admission decision is made?
Generally, institutions of postsecondary education are not permitted to make what is known as a "preadmission inquiry" about an applicant's disability status. Preadmission inquiries are permitted only if the institution of postsecondary education is taking remedial action to correct the effects of past discrimination or taking voluntary action to overcome the effects of conditions that limited the participation of individuals with disabilities.[6] Examples of impermissible preadmission inquiries include: Are you in good health? Have you been hospitalized for a medical condition in the past five years? Institutions of postsecondary education may inquire about an applicant's ability to meet essential program requirements provided that such inquiries are not designed to reveal disability status. For example, if physical lifting is an essential requirement for a degree program in physical therapy, an acceptable question that could be asked is, with or without reasonable accommodation, can you lift 25 pounds? After admission, in response to a student's request for academic adjustments,[7] reasonable modifications or auxiliary aids and services, institutions of postsecondary education may ask for documentation regarding disability status.

3. May institutions of postsecondary education deny an applicant admission because he or she has a disability?
No. If an applicant meets the essential requirements for admission, an institution may not deny that applicant admission simply because he or she has a disability, nor may an institution categorically exclude an applicant with a particular disability as not being qualified for its program.[8] For instance, an institution may not automatically assume that all applicants with hearing or visual impairments would be unable to meet the essential eligibility requirements of its music program. An institution may, however, require an applicant to meet any essential technical or academic standards for admission to, or participation in, the institution and its program.[9] An institution may deny admission to any student, disabled or not, who does not meet essential requirements for admission or participation.

4. Are institutions obligated to identify students with disabilities?
No. Institutions do not have a duty to identify students with disabilities. Students in institutions of postsecondary education are responsible for notifying institution staff of their disability should they need academic adjustments. High schools, in contrast, have an obligation to identify students within their jurisdiction who have a disability and who may be entitled to services.

5. Are students obligated to inform institutions that they have a disability?
No. A student has no obligation to inform an institution of postsecondary education that he or she has a disability; however, if the student wants an institution to provide an academic adjustment or assign the student to accessible housing or other facilities, or if a student wants other disability-related services, the student must identify himself or herself as having a disability. The disclosure of a disability is always voluntary. For example, a student who has a disability that does not require services may choose not to disclose his or her disability.

POST-ADMISSION: DOCUMENTATION OF A DISABILITY

6. What are academic adjustments and auxiliary aids and services?
Academic adjustments are defined in the Section 504 regulations at 34 C.F.R. § 104.44(a) (2006) as:
[S]uch modifications to the academic requirements as are necessary to ensure that such requirements do not discriminate or have the effect of discriminating, on the basis of [disability] against a qualified...applicant or student [with a disability]. Academic requirements that the recipient can demonstrate are essential to the instruction being pursued by such student or to any directly related licensing requirement will not be regarded as discriminatory within the meaning of this section. Modifications may include changes in the length of time permitted for the completion of degree

requirements, substitution of specific courses required for the completion of degree requirements, and adaptation of the manner in which specific courses are conducted.

Academic adjustments also may include a reduced course load, extended time on tests and the provision of auxiliary aids and services. Auxiliary aids and services are defined in the Section 504 regulations at 34 C.F.R. § 104.44(d), and in the Title II regulations at 28 C.F.R. § 35.104. They include note-takers, readers, recording devices, sign language interpreters, screen-readers, voice recognition and other adaptive software or hardware for computers, and other devices designed to ensure the participation of students with impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills in an institution's programs and activities. Institutions are not required to provide personal devices and services such as attendants, individually prescribed devices, such as eyeglasses, readers for personal use or study, or other services of a personal nature, such as tutoring. If institutions offer tutoring to the general student population, however, they must ensure that tutoring services also are available to students with disabilities. In some instances, a state VR agency may provide auxiliary aids and services to support an individual's postsecondary education and training once that individual has been determined eligible to receive services under the VR program.

7. In general, what kind of documentation is necessary for students with disabilities to receive academic adjustments from institutions of postsecondary education?

Institutions may set their own requirements for documentation so long as they are reasonable and comply with Section 504 and Title II. It is not uncommon for documentation standards to vary from institution to institution; thus, students with disabilities should research documentation standards at those institutions that interest them. A student must provide documentation, upon request, that he or she has a disability, that is, an impairment that substantially limits a major life activity and that supports the need for an academic adjustment. The documentation should identify how a student's ability to function is limited as a result of her or his disability. The primary purpose of the documentation is to establish a disability in order to help the institution work interactively with the student to identify appropriate services. The focus should be on whether the information adequately documents the existence of a current disability and need for an academic adjustment. A postsecondary institution may also request documentation to determine if a device or practice used by the student reduces or eliminates the effects of the student's impairment.

8. Who is responsible for obtaining necessary testing to document the existence of a disability?

The student. Institutions of postsecondary education are not required to conduct or pay for an evaluation to document a student's disability and need for an academic adjustment, although some institutions do so. If a student with a disability is eligible for services through the state VR Services program, he or she may qualify for an evaluation at no cost. High school educators can assist students with disabilities in locating their state VR agency at: http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transitionguide.html. If students with disabilities are unable to find other funding sources to pay for necessary evaluation or testing for postsecondary education, they are responsible for paying for it themselves.

At the elementary and secondary school levels, a school district's duty to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) encompasses the responsibility to provide, at no cost to the parents, an evaluation of suspected areas of disability for any of the district's students who is believed to be in need of special education or related aids and services. School districts are not required under Section 504 or Title II to conduct evaluations that are for the purpose of obtaining academic adjustments once a student graduates and goes on to postsecondary education.

9. Is a student's most recent individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan sufficient documentation to support the existence of a disability and the need for an academic adjustment in a postsecondary setting?

Generally, no. Although an IEP or Section 504 plan may help identify services that have been used by the student in the past, they generally are not sufficient documentation to support the existence of a current disability and need for an academic adjustment from an institution of postsecondary education. Assessment information and other material used to develop an IEP or Section 504 plan may be helpful to document a current disability or the need for an academic adjustment or auxiliary aids and services. In addition,

a student receiving services under Part B of the IDEA must be provided with a summary of his or her academic achievements and functional performance that includes recommendations on how to assist in meeting the student's postsecondary goals.[10] This information may provide helpful information about disability and the need for an academic adjustment.

10. What can high school personnel, such as school psychologists and counselors, transition specialists, special education staff and others, do to assist students with disabilities with documentation requirements?

By the time most students with disabilities are accepted into a postsecondary institution, they are likely to have a transition plan and-or to be receiving transition services, which may include evaluations and services provided by the state VR agency. High school personnel can help a student with disabilities to identify and address the specific documentation requirements of the postsecondary institution that the student will be attending. This may include assisting the student to identify existing documentation in her or his education records that would satisfy the institution's criteria, such as evaluation reports and the summary of the student's academic achievement and functional performance. School personnel should be aware that institutions of postsecondary education typically do not accept brief conclusory statements for which no supporting evidence is offered as sufficient documentation of a disability and the need for an academic adjustment. School personnel should also be aware that some colleges may delay or deny services if the diagnosis or the documentation is unclear.

11. Will a medical diagnosis from a treating physician help to document disability?

A diagnosis of impairment alone does not establish that an individual has a disability within the meaning of Section 504 or Title II. Rather, the impairment must substantially limit a major life activity, or the individual must have a record of such an impairment or be regarded as having such an impairment.[11] A diagnosis from a treating physician, along with information about how the disability affects the student, may suffice. As noted above, institutions of postsecondary education may set their own requirements for documentation so long as they are reasonable and comply with Section 504 and Title II.

12. If it is clear that a student has a disability, why does an institution need documentation?

Students who have the same disability may not necessarily require the same academic adjustment. Section 504 and Title II require that institutions of postsecondary education make individualized determinations regarding appropriate academic adjustments for each individual student. If the student's disability and need for an academic adjustment are obvious, less documentation may be necessary.

13. If an institution thinks that the documentation is insufficient, how will the student know?

If the documentation a student submitted for the institution's consideration does not meet the institution's requirements, an official should notify the student in a timely manner of what additional documentation the student needs to provide. As noted above, a student may need a new evaluation in order to provide documentation of a current disability.

POST-ADMISSION: OBTAINING SERVICES

14. Must institutions provide every academic adjustment a student with a disability wants?

It depends. Institutions are not required to provide an academic adjustment that would alter or waive essential academic requirements.[12] They also do not have to provide an academic adjustment that would fundamentally alter the nature of a service, program or activity or result in undue financial or administrative burdens considering the institution's resources as a whole.[13] For example, an appropriate academic adjustment may be to extend the time a student with a disability is allotted to take tests, but an institution is not required to change the substantive content of the tests. In addition, an institution is not required to make modifications that would result in undue financial or administrative burdens. Public institutions are required to give primary consideration to the auxiliary aid or service that the student requests, but can opt to provide alternative aids or services if they are effective. They can also opt to provide an effective alternative if the requested auxiliary aid or service would fundamentally alter the nature of a service, program or activity or result in undue financial or administrative burdens. For example, if it would be a fundamental alteration or undue burden to provide a student with a disability with a note-taker for oral classroom presentations and discussions and a tape recorder would

be an effective alternative, a postsecondary institution may provide the student with a tape recorder instead of a note-taker.

15. If students want to request academic adjustments, what must they do?
Institutions may establish reasonable procedures for requesting academic adjustments; students are responsible for knowing these procedures and following them. Institutions usually include information on the procedures and contacts for requesting an academic adjustment in their general information publications and Web sites. If students are unable to locate the procedures, they should contact an institution official, such as an admissions officer or counselor.

16. What should students expect in working with a disability coordinator at an institution of postsecondary education?
A high school counselor, a special education teacher or a VR counselor may meet with high school students with disabilities to provide services or monitor their progress under their education plans on a periodic basis. The role of the disability coordinator at an institution of postsecondary education is very different. At many institutions, there may be only one or two staff members to address the needs of all students with disabilities attending the institution. The disability coordinator evaluates documentation, works with students to determine appropriate services, assists students in arranging services or testing modifications, and deals with problems as they arise. A disability coordinator may have contact with a student with a disability only two or three times a semester. Disability coordinators usually will not directly provide educational services, tutoring or counseling, or help students plan or manage their time or schedules. Students with disabilities are, in general, expected to be responsible for their own academic programs and progress in the same ways that nondisabled students are responsible for them.

17. When should students notify the institution of their intention to request an academic adjustment?
As soon as possible. Although students may request academic adjustments at any time, students needing services should be advised to notify the institution as early as possible to ensure that the institution has enough time to review their request and provide an appropriate academic adjustment. Some academic adjustments, such as interpreters, may take time to arrange. In addition, students should not wait until after completing a course or activity or receiving a poor grade to request services and then expect the grade to be changed or to be able to retake the course.

18. How do institutions determine what academic adjustments are appropriate?
Once a student has identified him- or herself as an individual with a disability, requested an academic adjustment and provided appropriate documentation upon request, institution staff should discuss with the student what academic adjustments are appropriate in light of the student's individual needs and the nature of the institution's program. Students with disabilities possess unique knowledge of their individual disabilities and should be prepared to discuss the functional challenges they face and, if applicable, what has or has not worked for them in the past. Institution staff should be prepared to describe the barriers students may face in individual classes that may affect their full participation, as well as to discuss academic adjustments that might enable students to overcome those barriers.

19. Who pays for auxiliary aids and services?
Once the needed auxiliary aids and services have been identified, institutions may not require students with disabilities to pay part or all of the costs of such aids and services, nor may institutions charge students with disabilities more for participating in programs or activities than they charge students who do not have disabilities. Institutions generally may not condition their provision of academic adjustments on the availability of funds, refuse to spend more than a certain amount to provide academic adjustments, or refuse to provide academic adjustments because they believe other providers of such services exist.[14] In many cases, institutions may meet their obligation to provide auxiliary aids and services by assisting students in either obtaining them or obtaining reimbursement for their cost from an outside agency or organization, such as a state VR agency. Such assistance notwithstanding, institutions retain ultimate responsibility for providing necessary auxiliary aids and services and for any costs associated with providing such aids and services or utilizing outside sources. However, as noted above, if the institution can demonstrate that providing a specific auxiliary aid or service would result in undue financial

or administrative burdens, considering the institution's resources as a whole, it can opt to provide another effective one.

20. What if the academic adjustments the institution provides are not working?
If the academic adjustments provided are not meeting the student's needs, it is the student's responsibility to notify the institution as soon as possible. It may be too late to correct the problem if the student waits until the course or activity is completed. The student and the institution should work together to resolve the problem.

KEYS TO SUCCESS: ATTITUDE, SELF-ADVOCACY AND PREPARATION

The attitude and self-advocacy skills of students with disabilities may be two of the most important factors in determining their success or failure in postsecondary education. Students with disabilities need to be prepared to work collaboratively with the institution's disability coordinator to enable them to have an equal opportunity to participate in an institution's programs and activities. To ensure that students with disabilities possess the desired levels of self-advocacy to succeed in postsecondary education, high school educators may want to encourage the students to:

Understand their disabilities. Students with disabilities need to know the functional limitations that result from their disabilities and understand their strengths and weaknesses. They should be able to explain their disabilities to an institution's disability coordinators or other appropriate staff. As part of this process, students should be able to explain where they have had difficulty in the past, as well as what has helped them overcome such problems and what specific adjustments might work in specific situations. To assist students in this area, high school educators can encourage high school students to be active participants in their IEP or Section 504 meetings. High school personnel also can suggest that students practice explaining their disabilities, as well as why they need certain services, to appropriate secondary staff or through role-playing exercises to prepare them to engage in such conversations with confidence in a postsecondary setting.

Accept responsibility for their own success. All students, including those with disabilities, must take primary responsibility for their success or failure in postsecondary education. Students with disabilities, in particular, are moving from a system where parents and school staff usually advocated on their behalf to a system where they will be expected to advocate for themselves. An institution's staff will likely communicate directly with students when issues arise and are generally not required to interact with students' parents. In general, students with disabilities should expect to complete all course requirements, such as assignments and examinations. Students with disabilities need to identify the essential academic and technical standards that they will be required to meet for admission and continued participation in an institution's program. Students also need to identify any academic adjustments they may need as a result of their disabilities to meet those standards and how to request those adjustments. Students with disabilities need to understand that, while federal disability laws guarantee them an equal opportunity to participate these laws do not guarantee that students will achieve a particular outcome, for example, good grades.

Take an appropriate preparatory curriculum. Because all students will be expected to meet an institution's essential standards, students with disabilities need to take a high school curriculum that will prepare them to meet those standards. If students with disabilities plan to attend a rigorous postsecondary institution, they, like their peers without disabilities, need to make high school curriculum choices that support that goal. High school guidance counselors and state VR agency counselors, in particular, can play an important role in students' curriculum planning.

For all students, good study skills and the ability to write well are critical factors of success in postsecondary education. High school educators can help students in these areas by offering or identifying opportunities, such as workshops, courses or tutoring programs, that emphasize the importance of reading, writing and good study skills. In addition, staff should encourage students to enroll in classes that will focus on writing and study skills in their freshman year of postsecondary education.

Learn time management skills. Although a primary role of high school educators is to provide monitoring, direction and guidance to students as they approach the end of their high school career, staff also need to prepare students to act independently and to manage their own time with little to no supervision. High school educators can assist students by identifying resources that will help them learn time management and scheduling skills.

Acquire computer skills. Because postsecondary students use computers to complete a multitude of tasks, from registering for classes to accessing course material and obtaining grades, it is essential that students learn to use computers if they are to be prepared for postsecondary education. Ideally, students with disabilities need to start using computers as early as possible in school to increase their familiarity with, and their comfort level in using, computers. Students with visual impairments, hearing impairments, learning disabilities or mobility impairments may have problems with inputting data or reading a computer monitor. Assistive technology can help certain students with disabilities use computers and access information.

Consider supplemental postsecondary education preparatory programs. A variety of institutions of postsecondary education have summer programs in which students can participate while they are still in high school, or after graduation, to ease their transition to postsecondary education. These programs often expose students to experiences that they are likely to encounter in postsecondary education, such as living in dorms, relating to other students and eating in dining halls. The programs may also focus on instruction in certain subject areas, such as math or English, or in certain skills, such as computer, writing or study skills, that can prepare a student to be successful in postsecondary education. High school educators can assist students with disabilities by identifying such program opportunities in their area of residence.

Research postsecondary education programs. Students with disabilities may select any program for which they are qualified but should be advised to review carefully documentation standards and program requirements for their program or institution of interest. For example, students should pay close attention to an institution's program requirements, such as language or math, to avoid making a large financial and time commitment only to realize several years into a program that they cannot, even with academic adjustments, meet an essential requirement for program completion. Campus visits, which include visits to the disability services office, can be helpful in locating an environment that best meets a student's interests and needs. In addition, while all institutions have a legal obligation to provide appropriate services, certain colleges may be able to provide better services than others due to their size or location.

Get involved on campus. To help students avoid the isolation that can occur away from home during the first year of postsecondary education, high school educators should encourage students to live on campus and to become involved in campus activities. Attendance at orientation programs for freshmen is a good first step in discovering ways to get involved in the postsecondary education environment.

If you would like more information about the responsibilities of postsecondary schools to students with disabilities, read the OCR brochures Auxiliary Aids and Services for Postsecondary Students with Disabilities: Higher Education's Obligations Under Section 504 and Title II of the ADA and Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities. You may obtain copies of these brochures by contacting us at the address and phone numbers below or on the Department's Web site at: http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/publications.html#Section504. To receive more information about the civil rights of students with disabilities in education institutions, please contact OCR at:

Customer Service Team
Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
Washington, DC 20202-1100
Phone: 1-800-421-3481
TTY: 1-877-521-2172
E-mail: ocr@ed.gov
Web Address: http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html

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www.ed.gov/ocr/transitionguide.html. Any updates to this publication will be available on this Web site. On request, this publication can be made available in alternate formats, such as Braille, large print or computer diskette. For more information, please contact the Department's Alternate Format Center at 202-260-0852 or 202-260-0818, or via e-mail at Katie.Mincey@ed.gov. If you use a TDD, call 1-800-877-8339.

[1] The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) administers the IDEA. You can find additional information about the IDEA at http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/index.html, or by contacting OSEP at:
Office of Special Education Programs
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave. S.W.
Washington, DC 20202-7100
Telephone: 202-245-7459

[2] OSERS' Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) administers a formula grant program that funds state VR agencies to provide eligible individuals with disabilities with employment-related services, including services to facilitate transition. Additional information about this grant program is available at http://www.ed.gov/programs/rsabvrs/index.html or by contacting RSA at:
Rehabilitation Services Administration
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave. S.W.
Washington, DC 20202-2800
Telephone: 202-245-7488

[3] See 34 C.F.R. § 104.42(b) (2006); and 28 C.F.R. § 35.130(b)(8) (2006).

[4] See 28 C.F.R. § 35.130(b)(7) and 28 C.F.R. § 35.164 (2006).

[5] The term "accommodations" is also referenced under the IDEA and used by the major publishers of college entrance exams. The term generally refers to changes in the standardized testing conditions provided to a student with disabilities that will not impact the validity of the student's test scores.

[6] See 34 C.F.R. § 104.42(b)-(c) (2006).

[7] In this document, consistent with the Section 504 regulations at 34 C.F.R. § 104.44, we generally use the term "academic adjustments" to refer to modifications to nonessential academic requirements, reasonable changes to policies, procedures and practices, and the provision of auxiliary aids and services necessary for individuals with disabilities to participate in, and benefit from, the postsecondary education program. These terms are further explained in the section titled "Post-Admission: Documentation of Disability." It should be noted that the term "reasonable accommodations," commonly used in the employment context, also may be familiar to postsecondary school personnel.

[8] See 34 C.F.R. §§ 104.4 and 104.42 (2006); and 28 C.F.R. § 35.130 (2006).

[9] See 34 C.F.R. § 104.3(l)(3) (2006); and 28 C.F.R. § 35.104 (2006).

[10] See 34 C.F.R. § 300.305(e)(3) (effective Oct. 13, 2006).

[11] See 34 C.F.R. § 104.3 (2006); and 28 C.F.R. § 35.104 (2006).

[12] See 34 C.F.R. § 104.44(a) (2006).

[13] See 28 C.F.R. § 35.164 (2006).

[14] See 34 C.F.R. § 104.4 (2006); and 28 C.F.R. § 35.130 (2006).

APPENDIX II

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES PREPARING
FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities

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U.S. Department of Education
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Office for Civil Rights
Russlynn Ali
Assistant Secretary
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Office for Civil Rights
Washington, D.C. 20202

September 2007

More and more high school students with disabilities are planning to continue their education in postsecondary schools, including vocational and career schools, two- and four- year colleges, and universities. As a student with a disability, you need to be well informed about your rights and responsibilities as well as the responsibilities postsecondary schools have toward you. Being well informed will help ensure you have a full opportunity to enjoy the benefits of the postsecondary education experience without confusion or delay.

The information in this pamphlet, provided by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) in the U. S. Department of Education, explains the rights and responsibilities of students with disabilities who are preparing to attend postsecondary schools. This pamphlet also explains the obligations of a postsecondary school to provide academic adjustments, including auxiliary aids and services, to ensure the school does not discriminate on the basis of disability.

OCR enforces Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Title II), which prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. Practically every school district and postsecondary school in the United States is subject to one or both of these laws, which have similar requirements.*/

Although both school districts and postsecondary schools must comply with these same laws, the responsibilities of postsecondary schools are significantly different from those of school districts.

Moreover, you will have responsibilities as a postsecondary student that you do not have as a high school student. OCR strongly encourages you to know your responsibilities and those of postsecondary schools under Section 504 and Title II. Doing so will improve your opportunity to succeed as you enter postsecondary education.

The following questions and answers provide more specific information to help you succeed.

As a student with a disability leaving high school and entering postsecondary education, will I see differences in my rights and how they are addressed?

Yes. Section 504 and Title II protect elementary, secondary and postsecondary students from discrimination. Nevertheless, several of the requirements that apply through high school are different from the requirements that apply beyond high school. For instance, Section 504 requires a school district to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to each child with a disability in the district's jurisdiction. Whatever the disability, a school district must identify an individual's education needs and provide any regular or special education and related aids and services necessary to meet those needs as well as it is meeting the needs of students without disabilities.

Unlike your high school, your postsecondary school is not required to provide FAPE. Rather, your postsecondary school is required to provide appropriate academic adjustments as necessary to ensure that it does not discriminate on the basis of disability. In addition, if your postsecondary school provides housing to nondisabled students, it must provide comparable, convenient and accessible housing to students with disabilities at the same cost.

Other important differences you need to know, even before you arrive at your postsecondary school, are addressed in the remaining questions.

May a postsecondary school deny my admission because I have a disability?

No. If you meet the essential requirements for admission, a postsecondary school may not deny your admission simply because you have a disability.

Do I have to inform a postsecondary school that I have a disability?

No. However, if you want the school to provide an academic adjustment, you must identify yourself as having a disability. Likewise, you should let the school know about your disability if you want to ensure that you are assigned to accessible facilities. In any event, your disclosure of a disability is always voluntary.

What academic adjustments must a postsecondary school provide?

The appropriate academic adjustment must be determined based on your disability and individual needs. Academic adjustments may include auxiliary aids and modifications to academic requirements as are necessary to ensure equal educational opportunity. Examples of such adjustments are arranging for priority registration; reducing a course load; substituting one course for another; providing note takers, recording devices, sign language interpreters, extended time for testing and, if telephones are provided in dorm rooms, a TTY in your dorm room; and equipping school computers with screen-reading, voice recognition or other adaptive software or hardware.

In providing an academic adjustment, your postsecondary school is not required to lower or effect substantial modifications to essential requirements. For example, although your school may be required to provide extended testing time, it is not required to change the substantive content of the test. In addition, your postsecondary school does not have to make modifications that would fundamentally alter the nature of a service, program or activity or would result in undue financial or administrative burdens. Finally, your postsecondary school does not have to provide personal attendants, individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or other devices or services of a personal nature, such as tutoring and typing.

If I want an academic adjustment, what must I do?

You must inform the school that you have a disability and need an academic adjustment. Unlike your school district, your postsecondary school is not required to identify you as having a disability or assess your needs. Your postsecondary school may require you to follow reasonable procedures to request an academic adjustment. You are responsible for knowing and following these procedures. Postsecondary schools usually include, in their publications providing general information, information on the procedures and contacts for requesting an academic adjustment. Such publications include recruitment materials, catalogs and student handbooks, and are often available on school Web sites. Many schools also have staff whose purpose is to assist students with disabilities. If you are unable to locate the procedures, ask a school official, such as an admissions officer or counselor.

When should I request an academic adjustment?

Although you may request an academic adjustment from your postsecondary school at any time, you should request it as early as possible. Some academic adjustments may take more time to provide than others. You should follow your school's procedures to ensure that your school has enough time to review your request and provide an appropriate academic adjustment.

Do I have to prove that I have a disability to obtain an academic adjustment?

Generally, yes. Your school will probably require you to provide documentation that shows you have a current disability and need an academic adjustment.

What documentation should I provide?

Schools may set reasonable standards for documentation. Some schools require more documentation than others. They may require you to provide documentation prepared by an appropriate professional, such as a medical doctor, psychologist or other qualified diagnostician. The required documentation may include one or more of the following: a diagnosis of your current disability; the date of the diagnosis; how the diagnosis was reached; the credentials of the professional; how your disability affects a major life activity; and how the disability affects your academic performance. The documentation should provide enough information for you and your school to decide what is an appropriate academic adjustment.

Although an individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan, if you have one, may help identify services that have been effective for you, it generally is not sufficient documentation. This is because postsecondary education presents different demands than high school education, and what you need to meet these new demands may be different. Also in some cases, the nature of a disability may change.

If the documentation that you have does not meet the postsecondary school's requirements, a school official should tell you in a timely manner what additional documentation you need to provide. You may need a new evaluation in order to provide the required documentation.

Who has to pay for a new evaluation?

Neither your high school nor your postsecondary school is required to conduct or pay for a new evaluation to document your disability and need for an

academic adjustment. This may mean that you have to pay or find funding to pay an appropriate professional for an evaluation. If you are eligible for services through your state vocational rehabilitation agency, you may qualify for an evaluation at no cost to you. You may locate your state vocational rehabilitation agency through the following Web page:
http://www.jan.wvu.edu/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?902

Once the school has received the necessary documentation from me, what should I expect?

The school will review your request in light of the essential requirements for the relevant program to help determine an appropriate academic adjustment. It is important to remember that the school is not required to lower or waive essential requirements. If you have requested a specific academic adjustment, the school may offer that academic adjustment or an alternative one if the alternative would also be effective. The school may also conduct its own evaluation of your disability and needs at its own expense.

You should expect your school to work with you in an interactive process to identify an appropriate academic adjustment. Unlike the experience you may have had in high school, however, do not expect your postsecondary school to invite your parents to participate in the process or to develop an IEP for you.

What if the academic adjustment we identified is not working?

Let the school know as soon as you become aware that the results are not what you expected. It may be too late to correct the problem if you wait until the course or activity is completed. You and your school should work together to resolve the problem.

May a postsecondary school charge me for providing an academic adjustment?

No. Furthermore, it may not charge students with disabilities more for participating in its programs or activities than it charges students who do not have disabilities.

What can I do if I believe the school is discriminating against me?

Practically every postsecondary school must have a person—frequently called the Section 504 Coordinator, ADA Coordinator, or Disability Services Coordinator—– who coordinates the school's compliance with Section 504 or Title II or both laws. You may contact this person for information about how to address your concerns.

The school must also have grievance procedures. These procedures are not the same as the due process procedures with which you may be familiar from high school. However, the postsecondary school's grievance procedures must include steps to ensure that you may raise your concerns fully and fairly and must provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints.

School publications, such as student handbooks and catalogs, usually describe the steps you must take to start the grievance process. Often, schools have both formal and informal processes. If you decide to use a grievance process, you should be prepared to present all the reasons that support your request.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome from using the school's grievance procedures or you wish to pursue an alternative to using the grievance procedures, you may file a complaint against the school with OCR or in a court. You may learn more about the OCR complaint process from the brochure How to File a Discrimination Complaint with the Office for Civil Rights, which you may obtain by contacting us at the addresses and phone numbers below, or at http://www.ed.gov/ocr/docs/howto.html.

If you would like more information about the responsibilities of postsecondary schools to students with disabilities, read the OCR brochure Auxiliary Aids and Services for Postsecondary Students with Disabilities: Higher Education's Obligations Under Section 504 and Title II of the ADA. You may obtain a copy by contacting us at the address and phone numbers below, or at http://www.ed.gov/ocr/docs/auxaids.html.

Students with disabilities who know their rights and responsibilities are much better equipped to succeed in postsecondary school. We encourage you to work with the staff at your school because they, too, want you to succeed. Seek the support of family, friends and fellow students, including those with disabilities. Know your talents and capitalize on them, and believe in yourself as you embrace new challenges in your education.

To receive more information about the civil rights of students with disabilities in education institutions, you may contact us at :
Customer Service Team
Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
Washington, D.C. 20202-1100
Phone: 1-800-421-3481
TDD: 1- 877-521-2172
Email: ocr@ed.gov
Web site: www.ed.gov/ocr

*/You may be familiar with another federal law that applies to the education of students with disabilities—the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). That law is administered by the Office of Special Education Programs in the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services in the U.S. Department of Education. The IDEA and its Individualized Education Program (IEP) provisions do not apply to postsecondary schools. This pamphlet does not discuss the IDEA or state and local laws that may apply.

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APPENDIX III

AUXILLARY AIDS AND SERVICES FOR
POSTSECONDARY STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Auxiliary Aids and Services for Postsecondary Students with Disabilities

Higher Education's Obligations Under
Section 504 and Title II of the ADA
U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
Washington, D.C.
Revised September 1998

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
In 1973, Congress passed Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), a law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of physical or mental disability (29 U.S.C. Section 794). It states:
No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance . . . .
The Office for Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education enforces regulations implementing Section 504 with respect to programs and activities that receive funding from the Department. The Section 504 regulation applies to all recipients of this funding, including colleges, universities, and postsecondary vocational education and adult education programs. Failure by these higher education schools to provide auxiliary aids to students with disabilities that results in a denial of a program benefit is discriminatory and prohibited by Section 504.
Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) prohibits state and local governments from discriminating on the basis of disability. The Department enforces Title II in public colleges, universities, and graduate and professional schools. The requirements regarding the provision of auxiliary aids and services in higher education institutions described in the Section

504 regulation are generally included in the general nondiscrimination provisions of the Title II regulation.

Postsecondary School Provision of Auxiliary Aids

The Section 504 regulation contains the following requirement relating to a postsecondary school's obligation to provide auxiliary aids to qualified students who have disabilities:

A recipient . . . shall take such steps as are necessary to ensure that no handicapped student is denied the benefits of, excluded from participation in, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under the education program or activity operated by the recipient because of the absence of educational auxiliary aids for students with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills.

The Title II regulation states:

A public entity shall furnish appropriate auxiliary aids and services where necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, a service, program, or activity conducted by a public entity.

It is, therefore, the school's responsibility to provide these auxiliary aids and services in a timely manner to ensure effective participation by students with disabilities. If students are being evaluated to determine their eligibility under Section 504 or the ADA, the recipient must provide auxiliary aids in the interim.

Postsecondary Student Responsibilities

A postsecondary student with a disability who is in need of auxiliary aids is obligated to provide notice of the nature of the disabling condition to the college and to assist it in identifying appropriate and effective auxiliary aids. In elementary and secondary schools, teachers and school specialists may have arranged support services for students with disabilities. However, in postsecondary schools, the students themselves must identify the need for an auxiliary aid and give adequate notice of the need. The student's notification should be provided to the appropriate representative of the college who, depending upon the nature and scope of the request, could be the school's Section 504 or ADA coordinator, an appropriate dean, a faculty advisor, or a professor. Unlike elementary or secondary schools, colleges may ask the student, in response to a request for auxiliary aids, to provide supporting diagnostic test results and professional prescriptions for auxiliary aids. A college also may obtain its own professional determination of whether specific requested auxiliary aids are necessary.

Examples of Auxiliary Aids

Some of the various types of auxiliary aids and services may include:

- taped texts
- notetakers
- interpreters
- readers
- videotext displays
- television enlargers
- talking calculators
- electronic readers
- Braille calculators, printers, or typewriters
- telephone handset amplifiers
- closed caption decoders
- open and closed captioning
- voice synthesizers
- specialized gym equipment
- calculators or keyboards with large buttons
- reaching device for library use
- raised-line drawing kits
- assistive listening devices
- assistive listening systems
- telecommunications devices for deaf persons.

Technological advances in electronics have improved vastly participation by students with disabilities in educational activities. Colleges are not required to provide the most sophisticated auxiliary aids available; however, the aids provided must effectively meet the needs of a student with a disability. An institution has flexibility in choosing the specific aid or service it provides to the student, as long as the aid or service selected is effective. These aids should be selected after consultation with the student who will use them.

Effectiveness of Auxiliary Aids

No aid or service will be useful unless it is successful in equalizing the opportunity for a particular student with a disability to participate in the education program or activity. Not all students with a similar disability benefit equally from an identical auxiliary aid or service. The regulation refers to this complex issue of effectiveness in several sections, including:

Auxiliary aids may include taped texts, interpreters or other effective methods of making orally delivered materials available to students with hearing impair-

ments, readers in libraries for students with visual impairments, classroom equipment adapted for use by students with manual impairments, and other similar services and actions.

There are other references to effectiveness in the general provisions of the Section 504 regulation which state, in part, that a recipient may not:

Provide a qualified handicapped person with an aid, benefit, or service that is not as effective as that provided to others; or

Provide different or separate aid, benefits, or services to handicapped persons or to any class of handicapped persons unless such action is necessary to provide qualified handicapped persons with aid, benefits, or services that are as effective as those provided to others.

The Title II regulation contains comparable provisions. The Section 504 regulation also states:

[A]ids, benefits, and services, to be equally effective, are not required to produce the identical result or level of achievement for handicapped and nonhandicapped persons, but must afford handicapped persons equal opportunity to obtain the same result, to gain the same benefit, or to reach the same level of achievement, in the most integrated setting appropriate to the person's needs.

The institution must analyze the appropriateness of an aid or service in its specific context. For example, the type of assistance needed in a classroom by a student who is hearing-impaired may vary, depending upon whether the format is a large lecture hall or a seminar. With the one-way communication of a lecture, the service of a notetaker may be adequate, but in the two-way communication of a seminar, an interpreter may be needed. College officials also should be aware that in determining what types of auxiliary aids and services are necessary under Title II of the ADA, the institution must give primary consideration to the requests of individuals with disabilities.

Cost of Auxiliary Aids

Postsecondary schools receiving federal financial assistance must provide effective auxiliary aids to students who are disabled. If an aid is necessary for classroom or other appropriate (nonpersonal) use, the institution must make it available, unless provision of the aid would cause undue burden. A student with a disability may not be required to pay part or all of the costs of that aid or service. An institution may not limit what it spends for auxiliary aids or services or refuse to provide auxiliary aids because it believes that other providers of these services exist, or condition its provision of auxiliary aids on availability of funds. In many cases, an institution may meet its obligation to provide auxiliary aids by assisting the student in obtaining the aid or obtaining reimbursement for the cost of an aid from an outside agency or organization, such as a state rehabilitation agency or a private charitable organization. However, the institution remains responsible for providing the aid.

Personal Aids and Services

An issue that is often misunderstood by postsecondary officials and students is the provision of personal aids and services. Personal aids and services, including help in bathing, dressing, or other personal care, are not required to be provided by postsecondary institutions. The Section 504 regulation states:

Recipients need not provide attendants, individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or other devices or services of a personal nature.

Title II of the ADA similarly states that personal services are not required.

In order to ensure that students with disabilities are given a free appropriate public education, local education agencies are required to provide many services and aids of a personal nature to students with disabilities when they are enrolled in elementary and secondary schools. However, once students with disabilities graduate from a high school program or its equivalent, education institutions are no longer required to provide aids, devices, or services of a personal nature. Postsecondary schools do not have to provide personal services relating to certain individual academic activities. Personal attendants and individually prescribed devices are the responsibility of the student who has a disability and not of the institution. For example, readers may be provided for classroom use but institutions are not required to provide readers for personal use or for help during individual study time.

Questions Commonly Asked by Postsecondary Schools and Their Students

Q: What are a college's obligations to provide auxiliary aids for library study?

A: Libraries and some of their significant and basic materials must be made accessible by the recipient to students with disabilities. Students with disabilities must have the appropriate auxiliary aids needed to locate and obtain library resources. The college

library's basic index of holdings (whether formatted on-line or on index cards) must be accessible. For example, a screen and keyboard (or card file) must be placed within reach of a student using a wheelchair. If a Braille index of holdings is not available for blind students, readers must be provided for necessary assistance.

Articles and materials that are library holdings and are required for course work must be accessible to all students enrolled in that course. This means that if material is required for the class, then its text must be read for a blind student or provided in Braille or on tape. A student's actual study time and use of these articles are considered personal study time and the institution has no further obligation to provide additional auxiliary aids.

Q: What if an instructor objects to the use of an auxiliary or personal aid?

A: Sometimes postsecondary instructors may not be familiar with Section 504 or ADA requirements regarding the use of an auxiliary or personal aid in their classrooms. Most often, questions arise when a student uses a tape recorder. College teachers may believe recording lectures is an infringement upon their own or other students' academic freedom, or constitutes copyright violation.

The instructor may not forbid a student's use of an aid if that prohibition limits the student's participation in the school program. The Section 504 regulation states: A recipient may not impose upon handicapped students other rules, such as the prohibition of tape recorders in classrooms or of dog guides in campus buildings, that have the effect of limiting the participation of handicapped students in the recipient's education program or activity.

In order to allow a student with a disability the use of an effective aid and, at the same time, protect the instructor, the institution may require the student to sign an agreement so as not to infringe on a potential copyright or to limit freedom of speech.

Q: What if students with disabilities require auxiliary aids during an examination?

A: A student may need an auxiliary aid or service in order to successfully complete a course exam. This may mean that a student be allowed to give oral rather than written answers. It also may be possible for a student to present a tape containing the oral examination response. A test should ultimately measure a student's achievements and not the extent of the disability.

Q: Can postsecondary institutions treat a foreign student with disabilities who needs auxiliary aids differently than American students?

A: No, an institution may not treat a foreign student who needs auxiliary aids differently than an American student. A postsecondary institution must provide to a foreign student with a disability the same type of auxiliary aids and services it would provide to an American student with a disability. Section 504 and the ADA require that the provision of services be based on a student's disability and not on such other criteria as nationality.

Q: Are institutions responsible for providing auxiliary services to disabled students in filling out financial aid and student employment applications, or other forms of necessary paperwork?

A: Yes, an institution must provide services to disabled students who may need assistance in filling out aid applications or other forms. If the student requesting assistance is still in the process of being evaluated to determine eligibility for an auxiliary aid or service, help with this paperwork by the institution is mandated in the interim.

Q: Does a postsecondary institution have to provide auxiliary aids and services for a nondegree student?

A: Yes, students with disabilities who are auditing classes or who otherwise are not working for a degree must be provided auxiliary aids and services to the same extent as students who are in a degree-granting program.

For more information on Section 504 and the ADA and their application to auxiliary aids and services for disabled students in postsecondary schools, or to obtain additional assistance, see the list of OCR's 12 enforcement offices containing the address and telephone number for the office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.

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