

GUIDANCE FOR TRANSITION IEP – STUDENTS WITH SIGNIFICANT NEEDS

Indicator 13 of the State Performance Plan mandates an IEP that includes:

- Appropriate measurable post-secondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age-appropriate transition assessments; transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those post-secondary goals; and annual IEP goals related to the student’s transition service needs.
- There must be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP team meeting where transition services are to be discussed. If the student is not present, their preferences, interests, and strengths must be documented.
- If appropriate, there must also be evidence that a representative of any participating agency was invited to the IEP team meeting with prior consent.

What does this mean for students who have significant needs, and how can teachers create a robust, quality transition program for these students? The following breaks down each element of the transition section of the IEP and how to address these areas for students who need significant supports.

1. Transition Evaluation

There are a variety of tools that can be used to assess transition skills and needs. No single assessment will work for every student, and utilizing only one assessment is often not enough to gather the information needed to develop a comprehensive transition plan, especially when a student is unable to or has difficulty providing information.

Transition assessment may include:

- Paper and pencil tests
- Structured student and family interviews
- Community and work-based assessments
- Curriculum-based assessments
- Observations
- Person-Centered Thinking Tools and LifeCourse Materials

It may be helpful to obtain information from parents, siblings, and caregivers to develop a quality transition plan.

Some formal transition assessments for students with high needs include:

- TRS 3.0 for learners with pervasive and long-term support needs
- Casey Life Skills
- Personal Preference Indicators
- Pictorial Interest Inventory
- Adaptive Behavior Scales
- Brigance Life Skills/Employability Skills Inventories

Remember, even for students with more significant needs, you **must assess Employment, Education and/or Training, and Independent Living**. If you are having difficulty finding information in an area, more assessment is needed.

Sometimes more general skills need to be broken down into individual components to create a quality transition plan. For example, is the student able to get themselves out of bed on time using an alarm clock? Can the student follow verbal directions? A visual schedule? Is the student able to complete simple tasks independently, or do they need hand-over-hand assistance? This information can be crucial in determining long-term goals.

2. Transition Report

A written report must be compiled outlining student's strengths and needs as noted on the transition assessment(s). This reporting may look very similar to academic skill-based assessment, as the purpose of transition evaluation is to note specific skill strengths and needs, along with interests and preferences. The written report should present the findings of the transition assessment in a way that the family and IEP team can understand, and should be shared with the IEP team, including the family and/or individual. A copy should also be kept in the student's file.

3. Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAPs)

The strengths and needs identified in the assessment report should be addressed/brought forward into the PLAAPPs. Just as academic skill-based information is used to formulate annual goals, the information gleaned from the transition assessment will be used to create Measurable Post-Secondary Goals and appropriate transition services and activities for the student.

4. Measurable Post-Secondary Goals (MPSGs)

MPSGs address goals after high school or aging out of school services. Goals are required in Employment, Education and/or Training, and Independent Living when appropriate. For students with significant needs, the team needs to consider if independent living should be addressed throughout the IEP. If independent living is not included in the IEP, the reasoning for this decision should be documented on the Parental Prior Written Notice (PPWN). MPSGs should be written in measurable language ("I will..." "Student will...") and throughout the years should become more specific based on the student's strengths, preferences, interests, and needs.

MPSGs for students with significant needs should:

- reflect high yet realistic expectations,
- reflect "forward movement" instead of a "dead-end" approach, and
- consider incorporating external supports.

For students who are unable to indicate their preferences and interests, utilize observations of the student, both yours and others familiar with the student, to determine the student's preferences. For example, is there a task or chore that the student appears to enjoy, either at home or at school? Does the student enjoy folding, dusting, cooking, or cleaning task? Are there sensory rewards the student enjoys that could be integrated into a vocational setting, such as vacuuming? Is the student good with technology, sorting, or matching? Could a way be found to integrate these skills into a job skill, such as stocking shelves with support?

A student's MPSG for employment is not required to address paid employment, but instead can address volunteering, ideally in an integrated setting, such as a nonprofit agency. Likewise, education and/or training does not have to address formal education.

Below is an example for a transition-aged student who has significant motor deficits and is nonverbal. In school, she requires a one-on-one aide for all tasks. However, it has been observed that she smiles and giggles when she engages in dishwashing with her paraprofessional:

Employment:

Student will wash dishes volunteering at a non-profit with hand-over-hand assistance from a job coach or direct service professional.

Education and/or Training:

Student will receive on-the-job training with hand-over-hand assistance from a job coach, direct service professional, or with natural supports.

Independent Living:

Student will either reside in her parents' home with assistance from her parents and a Community Support Provider/Family Support, or in a group home setting with assistance from a direct support professional.

Note that in each MSPG, supports have been identified.

5. Transition Course of Study

As with students who require fewer supports, the Course of Study section of the IEP for students with significant needs should be constructed with MSPGs in mind. Everything in the IEP should lead the student to meeting their post-secondary goals.

It is also required that these courses be outlined as specifically as possible and mapped out to the student's exit from school services.

The following are real-life examples of the Course of Study section of the IEP for students with significant needs:

Student A – Student planning to attend 18-21 program

Grade 9 (age14)	Grade 10 (age 15)	Grade 11 (age 16)	Grade 12 (age 17)	Grade 12+ (age 18)	Grade 12+ (age 19)	Grade 12+ (age 20)	Grade 12+ (age 21)
English Language Arts 1 Substituted for Literature	English Language Arts 2 Substituted for American Literature	English Language Arts 3 Substituted for Language Arts Elective/Writing	English Language Arts 4 Substituted for Composition	Community Literacy Skills 1	Community Literacy Skills 2	Community Literacy Skills 3	Community Literacy Skills 4
Functional Math 1 Substituted for Algebra 1	Functional Math 2 Substituted for Algebra 2	Functional Math 3 Substituted for Geometry	Functional Math 4 Substituted for Personal Finance	Consumer and Personal Math Skills 1	Consumer and Personal Math Skills 2	Consumer and Personal Math Skills 3	Consumer and Personal Math Skills 4
Practical Science and Health 1 Substituted for Biology	Practical Science and Health 2 Substituted for Physical Science	Practical Science and Health 3 Substituted for Chemistry or Physics	Practical Science and Health	Current Events	Current Events	Current Events	Current Events
Functional Social Science Substituted for US History	Functional Social Science Substituted for US Government and World History	Functional Social Science Substituted for Geography and Social Studies Elective		Functional Social Science	Functional Social Science	Functional Social Science	Functional Social Science
Communication and Social Skills 1 Substituted for Speech or Debate	Communication and Social Skills 2 Substituted for Speech or Debate	Communication and Social Skills 3	Communication and Social Skills 4	Social skills in the community, home, and workplace	Social skills in the community, home, and workplace	Social skills in the community, home, and workplace	Social skills in the community, home, and workplace
Fine Arts	Fine Arts	Fine Arts	Fine Arts	Functional Social Science	Functional Social Science	Functional Social Science	Functional Social Science
Physical Education/Health	Physical Education/Health	Physical Education/Health	Physical Education/Health	Lifetime Fitness	Lifetime Fitness	Lifetime Fitness	Lifetime Fitness

Student B – Student planning to receive post-secondary services from a Community Support Provider

Grade 8/9 (15/16)	Grade 10 (17)	Grade 11 (18)	Grade 12 (19)	Grade 12+ (20)	Grade 12+ (21)
Applied Reading – Comprehension	Applied Reading – Personal Life	Applied Reading – Daily Living	Applied Reading – Employability	Applied Reading – Community Living	Applied Reading – Job Inventories
Applied Math – Geometric Shapes	Applied Math – Time Management	Applied Math – Cooking Measurements	Applied Math – Banking Basics	Applied Math – Budgeting	Applied Math – Banking
Applied Written Expression – Paragraphs	Applied Written Expression – Job Applications	Applied Written Expression – Job Interviews	Applied Written Expression – Job Interest Surveys	Applied Written Expression – Work Attitudes	Applied Written Expression – Volunteer Jobs
Transition Curriculum – Life Skills	Transition Curriculum – Life Skills	Transition Curriculum – Life Skills	Transition Curriculum – Life Skills	Transition Curriculum – Life Skills	Transition Curriculum – Life Skills

Please note, due to modification and substitution of courses, the above students **would not** be on track to receive a signed diploma.

6. Transfer of Rights

Transfer of Rights must be addressed on or before the student's 17th birthday, in other words, at least one year before the student turns 18. This allows the family/team one year to discuss and arrange guardianship, power of attorney, or other decision-making supports.

7. Graduation or Completion of an Approved Program

This area of the IEP must be addressed at least one year prior to the student's exit from school services.

Student is to graduate/complete program: _____ (Date)

The date entered in this area should be the student's **exit** date. If the student takes part in graduation ceremonies along with their class during what would have typically been their senior year (i.e., "walks across the stage") you would not include that date here. Instead, this is the date the student leaves school services and the school has met FAPE. Generally, this is June 30th of the year the student turns 21 years old.

Also in this section, the district must address any remaining requirements to meet graduation guidelines.

Individualized district specific requirements and remaining courses to complete an approved secondary education program: _____

For students who will be attending school services until age 21 who will not be meeting requirements to receive a signed diploma, a statement to this effect should be included in this section. For example:

Individualized district specific requirements and remaining courses to complete an approved secondary education program: Due to modified curriculum, student is not on track to graduate with a signed diploma but will be taking part in taking part in programming at _____ when he/she turns 21, at which time all services from _____ School will cease.

Please note that school activities/programming includes 18-21 programs, even if they are at a location other than the school building as the district is responsible for financially supporting these services.

8. Summary of Performance (SOP)

When a student receiving services from an IEP approaches the end of their school career, it is required that a Summary of Performance be completed. This should be completed with the most recent and thorough information as possible, keeping in mind who may be supporting the student next, such as a

Community Support Provider, Conflict Free Case Manager, parent, etc. This document can be used to determine what the student’s strengths and needs are, and what interventions are needed and effective.

While a meeting is not required, it is highly encouraged. When a student exits school services, a PPWN is required to show change in placement.

9. Transition Services/Coordinated Set of Activities

The Services and Activities section is used to document things that need to happen that will help students achieve their post-secondary goals. Often these are activities teachers are already doing in the classroom.

At a minimum, **one service/activity must be listed for each MSPG**; however, best practice is to list a variety.

Consider the student’s Measurable Post-Secondary Goals, what skills the student will need to accomplish those goals, and what needs to happen to build these skills.

For example, students of all ability levels may benefit from services with Vocational Rehabilitation. One service/activity could be to apply for VR services and/or work with their VR counselor. If supports will be needed from an adult service agency, such as Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired or a Community Support Provider, researching these adult services could also be included.

One example for a student with more significant needs is as follows:

Transition Services / Coordinated Set of Activities

Transition Services must be a coordinated set of activities/strategies designed within a results-oriented process. This means that the activities are those steps or things that need to happen that will lead to post-school results and help the student achieve his/her desired post-secondary goals. All of the activities that will need to happen to help students achieve their post-secondary goals cannot be done by the school alone. Thus, the activities should include those things that others (student, families, and appropriate adult services, agencies or programs) will need to do. When viewed as a whole, the activities should demonstrate involvement and coordination between the student, families, and school as well as the appropriate adult services, agencies or programs.

Instruction:

<u>Activity Recommendations</u>	<u>Personnel/Agency/Person Responsible</u>	<u>Date Initiated</u>	<u>Date Completed</u>
Research available job coaching/training	student, SpEd teacher, VR counselor		
Complete assistive technology assessment	student, SpEd teacher, DakotaLink		

Employment:

<u>Activity Recommendations</u>	<u>Personnel/Agency/Person Responsible</u>	<u>Date Initiated</u>	<u>Date Completed</u>
Visit with VR and apply for services	student, family		
Attend Let's Talk Work	student, SpEd teacher		

Community Experiences:

<u>Activity Recommendations</u>	<u>Personnel/Agency/Person Responsible</u>	<u>Date Initiated</u>	<u>Date Completed</u>
Go on shopping/dining outings	SpEd Teacher, SpEd Staff		
Look into participation in Special Olympics	student/parents		

Related Services:

<u>Activity Recommendations</u>	<u>Personnel/Agency/Person Responsible</u>	<u>Date Initiated</u>	<u>Date Completed</u>
Identify and tour adult service agencies	student, parents, SpEd Teacher, SpEd Staff		
Explore applying for SSI	student, parents, SpEd Teacher		
Explore financial assistance available (LEAP, SNAP, etc.)	student, parents, SpEd Teacher		

Other Post-School Adult Living Objectives

<u>Activity Recommendations</u>	<u>Personnel/Agency/Person Responsible</u>	<u>Date Initiated</u>	<u>Date Completed</u>
Research services through local CSP	student, SpEd Teacher, SpEd Staff		
Research case management	student, SpEd Teacher, SpEd Staff		

Acquisition of Daily Living Skills (when appropriate)

<u>Activity Recommendations</u>	<u>Personnel/Agency/Person Responsible</u>	<u>Date Initiated</u>	<u>Date Completed</u>
Cooking in the classroom with assistance	student, SpEd Teacher, SpEd Staff		
Work on personal hygiene	student, family, SpEd Teacher, SpEd staff		

Functional Vocational Evaluation (when appropriate)

<u>Activity Recommendations</u>	<u>Personnel/Agency/Person Responsible</u>	<u>Date Initiated</u>	<u>Date Completed</u>
Explore situational vocational assessment	student, SpEd Teacher, VR Counselor		

More examples of services/activities can be found in the Technical Assistance Guide for Transition in the IEP, found at TSLP.org, or contact your regional liaison.

10. Annual Goals

Annual goals should link to the student’s MPSGs and should be related to the student’s transition needs. Annual goals should help the student increase skills to help reach their goals for the future. As with the Course of Study and Services/Coordinated Set of Activities sections of the IEP, annual goals should be designed to help the student build the skills necessary to reach their Measurable-Post Secondary Goals.

11. Student Participation

Students must be invited to their IEP meetings whenever transition will be discussed (by age 16 and until they leave school services), and documentation of this invitation should be included in the student’s file, such as on the meeting notice or as a personal invitation. This requirement includes students with significant needs. The student should be encouraged to participate as they are able, which might require preparation prior to the meeting using scripts, a picture show they can share at the meeting, introducing IEP team members, greeting the meeting participants, etc. When student participation in the meeting is not possible, documentation of their input (to the extent possible) and their interests and preferences should be noted on the IEP or in the PPWN.

12. Adult Agency Involvement

For all students receiving special education services, the team is required to consider involvement of outside agencies, and there must be evidence that representatives from these agencies were invited to the meeting with prior signed consent of the parent/guardian or student who has reached the age of majority.

So, how does the team determine who to invite? Consider what services that student will need after leaving the school system. As noted earlier, many students may benefit from connection with Vocational Rehabilitation. Will the student need residential services? Case management? Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired? South Dakota Deaf Resources and Outreach Programs? Mental health counseling? Independent Living Choices? As a team, discuss which agencies and outside resources the student will need to access to be as successful as possible, and to meet their goals.

It is the role of the Special Education teacher to suggest options of outside agencies that could benefit the student, and it is a team decision which agencies to invite to the meeting and when. If an agency is invited to the meeting but cannot attend, document this on the PPWN.

Signed Consent to Invite Outside Agencies must be obtained prior to sending out the meeting notice to invite the appropriate agencies.

For example, the following Consent to Invite Outside Agencies was signed on 09-14-2024:

The specific agency(ies) we would like to invite to attend the next IEP meeting include:

XX Vocational Rehabilitation
 Division of Developmental Disabilities (e.g. Resource Coordinator, Family Support 360)
 Community Support Provider [REDACTED]
 Disability Services (college or technical institute) [REDACTED]
 XX Other Family Support Coordinator
 XX Other Independent Living Choices

Note: You can add or decline consent for a specific agency. Please note on this form.

Please Sign, Date, and Return As Soon As Possible

X **I CONSENT¹** Having been informed as stated above, I give my consent for the school district to invite a representative of the above agency(ies) to attend the next IEP meeting.


I DO NOT CONSENT¹ Having been informed as stated above, I do not give my consent for the school district to invite a representative of the above agency(ies) to attend the next IEP meeting.

Parent/ Guardian/or Adult Student Signature: Parent Doe
 Date: 9-14-24

Note: This consent will remain in effect for the next IEP meeting or one year from the date signed, whichever comes first. Your consent is voluntary and may be revoked in writing at any time.

¹ Consent definition can be found in Administrative Rules of South Dakota (ARSD) 24:05:13:01

Therefore, the Meeting Notice should be dated **after** signed consent was received. In this case, the teacher sent the meeting notice on 09-16-2024.

		MEETING NOTICE ARSD 24:05:27:01.01 & 24:05:25:16	
STUDENT NAME: Student Doe		SIMS: 123456	
PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME: Parent Doe		DATE SENT: 09-16-24	
SCHOOL DISTRICT: South Dakota School Dist.		SCHOOL: SD High School	
DOB: 12-24-2006	AGE: 17	GRADE:	

Parents and student can invite anyone they choose to the meeting, which should be documented, such as in the PPWN.

For further questions or concerns working through the transition process, or to seek more information about available services, please contact your regional liaison, or go to TSLP.org for more information.