Secondary Transition 101: What Families Need to Know

Transition From School to Adult Life
The Arc of Massachusetts - November 2019
Today’s Handouts

• PowerPoint
• “Looking into the Future for a Child with Autism”
• Parent and student brochures
• IDEA Regulations Handout
• Components of Self-Determination
• Transition Planning Form
• Tool for Exploring Decision-Making Supports
• The Arc Timeline
Experience has taught me that you cannot value dreams according to the odds of their coming true.

Their real value is in stirring within us the will to aspire.

— *US Supreme Court Justice*
*Sonia Sotomayor*
Inspiration and Hope
https://youtu.be/jjyENb2qbu0 and https://intelligentlives.org/
“Disability exists only in the gap between the individual’s personal competence and the demands of the environment. If we can close that gap, disability becomes irrelevant.”

-- Dr. Michael Wehmeyer, University of Kansas
What is Secondary Transition?

• a **coordinated** set of activities for a child with a disability that is designed to be within a **results-oriented process**, that is focused on improving the **academic and functional achievement** of the child with a disability to **facilitate the child’s movement from school to post-school activities**, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.

  -- IDEA 2004: 34 CFR 300.43, Transition Services
Massachusetts Student-Driven Secondary Transition Model

Connections to Charting the Lifecourse
Self-Determination
An All-Student Perspective

• What experiences would a student without disabilities be expected to have?
Dignity of Risk

• The respect that comes with personhood includes the right to try and fail.

• If they don’t experience both the positive and negative consequences of their decisions, young people have difficulty understanding the connection between their choices and the full range of possible outcomes.

• Learning to say “no” and having the expectation that “no” will be respected is an important leadership and safety skill.
Families Play a Powerful Role During Secondary Transition!

Community Networking – Skill development – Assessment
Transition Process Overview
By Age 14

• Student is invited to the IEP meeting as a full member of the Team.

• Beginning at age 14, and continuing annually, the Team discusses:
  o student’s needs, strengths, preferences, interests
  o student’s desired outcomes for postsecondary education/training, employment, and adult living.
  o date of the student’s graduation/exit

Start Early!
By Age 14 & Older: Developmental Suggestions

• Can your child describe:
  o strengths?
  o learning style?
  o how the disability affects their learning, social experiences, and community participation?
  o vision for the future?

• Has your child received instruction and/or engaged in role play to enable them to **actively participate in/lead the IEP meeting**?

• What can your child do **independently**? Does your child know how to make and keep friends? Can your child get themselves ready for the day? Can your child be flexible with changes in routine?
Secondary Transition IEP Process: The Big Picture

Assessment
- Strengths
- Needs
- Preferences
- Interests

TPF - brainstorm
- Vision/PSG
- Disability-Related Needs
- Action Plan

IEP - contract
- Vision
- Concerns
- Assessment
- Supports
- Goals
- Services
When we look through a secondary transition lens, we ask:

- Do the TPF and IEP document a **coordinated plan** that addresses the student’s disability-related needs and builds skills that the student will need to succeed in their desired future in:
  - Postsecondary education/training?
  - Competitive employment?
  - Independent living?
  - Community participation?

- Can any reader understand this plan? Is it a true roadmap?
Start with Age Appropriate Transition Assessment
Transition Assessment Answers Essential Questions

- Discern the student’s vision
- Illuminate the student’s needs, strengths, preferences, interests
- Measure progress
A Transition Frame of Mind

• Any assessment that is conducted when a student on an IEP is aged 14-22 can be viewed as a transition assessment, because it affords information which can be utilized to discern the student’s vision; understand the student’s needs, strengths, preference, and interests; and measure progress towards the acquisition of skills.
An Individualized, Question-Driven Process

The number and type of assessments which are appropriate to conduct for each student is determined by the number and type of questions about the student for which answers are needed.
What Questions Need to be Considered?

• **Who is the student?**
  (i.e., what are the student’s needs and strengths)

• Who does the **student want to be**, or what does the **student want to do**?
  (i.e., what are the student’s preferences and interests)

• **What is the fit** between the student and the requirements of the educational, employment, and living environments into which the student plans to move when he or she exits high school?
Transition Assessment Requirement - The Four Secondary Transition Domains:

- Postsecondary Education/Training
- (Competitive) Employment
- Independent Living
- Community Participation

What information do we already have about this unique student in each transition domain?

What do we need to find out about this unique student in each transition domain?

Conduct Transition Assessment, to obtain needed information in any or all of the domains, as appropriate for each unique student. Not every student needs assessment in every domain, because the IEP Team may already have all of the information it needs.

- What are the student’s needs and strengths in each domain?
- What does the student want to be or do in adult life, in each domain?
- What is the fit between the student right now and the adult life they want for themselves, in each domain?
- What skills (if any) does the student need to build in each domain, in order to move closer to the desired future?
Assessment Data Can Be Collected:

- **Across multiple settings**
  - School (both academic and “life of the school”)
  - Home
  - Community
  - Workplace

- **From a variety of people**
  - The student
  - Families
  - Teachers
  - Friends
  - Employers
  - Coaches
  - Agency personnel
  - Etc.

**An Ongoing Process Over Time**
Two Types of Assessment

- **Informal**
- **Formal**
Families: A Key Role in Assessment

• Families can collect assessment information: what skills do you observe at home? In the community?
• Families can help educators draw connections and make meaning out of assessments.
• Families know about their children when they are with them – but not when they are NOT with them. Educators know about students when they are with them – but not when they are NOT with them. Families and educators fill in each other’s gaps.
Informal Assessment: Example

CHARTING the LifeCourse

Tool for Exploring Decision Making Supports

This tool was designed to assist individuals and supporters with exploring decision making support needs for each life domain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Individual:</th>
<th>Name of person completing this form:</th>
<th>Relationship to individual (circle one):</th>
<th>How long have you known the Individual?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Family</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For each question below, mark the level of support you need when making and communicating decisions and choices in the Charting the LifeCourse life domains.

I can decide with no extra support | I need support with my decision | I need someone to decide for me

DAILY LIFE & EMPLOYMENT

Can I decide if or where I want to work?

Can I look for and find a job (read ads, apply, use personal contacts)?

Do I plan what my day will look like?

Do I decide if I want to learn something new and how to best go about that?

Can I make big decisions about money? (open bank account, make

For more information, visit the website:

http://www.lifecoursetools.com/planning/
The Transition Planning Form (TPF)

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Transition Planning Form

**TRANSITION PLANNING FORM (TPF)**

Massachusetts requires that beginning when the eligible student is 14 for the IEP developed that year, the school district must plan for the student’s need for transition services and the school district must document this discussion annually. This form is to be maintained with the IEP and revisited each year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student:</th>
<th>SASID:</th>
<th>Age:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date form completed:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anticipated date of graduation:</td>
<td>Current IEP dates from:</td>
<td>to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anticipated date of 688 referral, if applicable:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**POST-SECONDARY VISION**

Write the student’s POST-SECONDARY VISION in the box below. In collaboration with the family, consider the student’s preferences and interests, and the desired outcomes for post-secondary education/ training, employment, and adult living. This section should correspond with the vision statement on IEP 1.

**DISABILITY RELATED NEEDS**

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
What is the TPF?

- Flexible **brainstorming tool** used at the beginning of the IEP meeting when the student turns 14.
- Guides and documents the team’s Transition planning discussion. Allows the Team to “think outside the box.”
- **Informs IEP development.**
- Provides an action plan to be implemented by student, family, community members, adult agencies, etc.
- A state-mandated form that must be maintained with the IEP **but is not part of the IEP.**
- **Nothing on the TPF is mandated to occur. The contents are not a contract.**
In What Order?

★ The Team discusses and completes the TPF before completing the IEP form.

★ The student’s vision statement/postsecondary goals from the TPF are transferred directly to the Vision statement on the IEP. (The rest of the Team may add their thoughts to the Vision statement when it is on the IEP, if desired.)

★ The student’s disability-related needs from the TPF are used to inform annual goal development on the IEP. An annual IEP goal should focus on building skills that will make the biggest difference to the student during that school year. Each year’s annual goals build skills, year over year, that will promote the realization of the student’s vision/postsecondary goals.

★ Elements from the Action Plan may be included in the IEP, if the school district is responsible for them.
A roadmap for the student to achieve his/her vision through specially designed instruction, related services.

**Individualized Education Program (IEP)**

A legal document spelling out what the district will do.
Student Vision = “Postsecondary Goals”

Postsecondary Goals = goals that a student hopes to achieve after leaving secondary school (i.e., high school).

Each student's TPF and IEP vision statement must explicitly include at least*:

1. One measurable postsecondary goal in the area of education/training;
2. One measurable postsecondary goal in the area of employment;
3. If appropriate, one measurable postsecondary goal in the area of independent living.
What if my child has no idea what they want to do?

• Young people may not have a clear vision of their future. Start the conversation. Provide experiences over time which can help students discern what they want.

• Talk with your child at home and in the community about your child’s dreams, strengths, interests, and challenges. Avoid introducing the vision discussion at the IEP table, when your child may feel overwhelmed.

• Everyone can communicate. Even if your child has quite significant disabilities, ensure that their preferences and interests are discussed and incorporated into the vision.
What if my child knows exactly what they want to do, but I think it’s unrealistic?

• Respect your child’s vision.
• See the vision as the start of a wonderful conversation.
• **Identify the skills required by the vision** and **provide opportunities** to develop those skills, at home and in the community. Talk with your child’s teachers about how the school can help to develop needed skills.
• Brainstorm and collaborate with educators and community members to provide related employment opportunities/experiences, including informational interviews, job shadowing, job carving, time-limited internships, competitive integrated employment.
The vision as concrete guide

Vision (TPF 1 and IEP):
After I get out of high school, I am going to live at home until I get a job maybe with animals and then I’m going to get an apartment with a friend or two who have jobs and we can live in the city but near my house and my mom and dad.

Disability Related Needs (TPF 1):
• Communication (making choices, associating cause-effect, language pragmatics)
• Career skills (career exploration skills, soft skills, skills related to specific job experiences, e.g. internships)
• Activities of Daily Living (self-care, menu planning, personal safety, money management, self advocacy)
• Academic skills (expanded sight words, functional math skills, augmentative communication technology use)
The team refers to the student's vision/postsecondary goals and the student’s disability-related needs, and asks:

• What skills, strengths, interests, personal attributes, and accomplishments does the student currently have that will contribute to their postsecondary success?

• What skills and strengths will the student need to acquire in order to achieve their desired postsecondary outcomes?
Possible Goal Focus areas

- Reading comprehension skills
- Communication skills
- Time management skills
- Self advocacy skills
- Self-regulation skills
- Organization skills
- Independent travel skills
- Money management skills
- Interpersonal and social skills
- College and career exploration skills
- Mathematics skills
- Fine Motor skills
- Healthcare skills
- Writing skills
- Etc.

Goals are written to reflect what the student will do, not what service is provided.

The Goal Focus targets priority skill-building needs that clearly align with the student’s vision statement.
Any reader of an IEP for a student aged 14-22 should be able to see a clear linkage between... the student's

- postsecondary goals (i.e., vision)
- transition assessments
- annual IEP goals, and
- transition services.
An ongoing process, beginning at age 14
By Age 16 and Older: Developmental Suggestions

• Student-led IEPs

• Disability Disclosure:
  o Brochure on Disability Disclosure: https://fcsn.org/linkcenter/transition-resources/brochures/

• Can your child:
  o Describe important laws that protect his/her rights as a person with a disability?
  o Talk about their needs?
  o Describe preferred accommodations and assistive technology?
  o Ask for necessary support from familiar/unfamiliar people in his/her environment, e.g., teachers, employers, community members?
  o Identify medical/daily living requirements and how to access supports, e.g. doctors, medication?
Additional Federal and State Requirements

AGE 18

• Age of Majority: Transfer of parental rights for most students: *Administrative Advisory SPED 2011-1: Age of Majority*,
  www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/11_1.html

AGES 18-22

• Chapter 688 referral 2 years prior to exiting school,
  www.doe.mass.edu/sped/688

Summary of Performance [34 CFR 300.305(e)(3)]
  www.doe.mass.edu/sped/IDEA2004/spr_meetings/eval_exitsummary.pdf
Resources

- Family and Student Transition Brochures, [https://fcsn.org/linkcenter/transition-resources/brochures/](https://fcsn.org/linkcenter/transition-resources/brochures/)
- Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2017-1: Characteristics of High Quality Secondary Transition Services, [http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/2017-1ta.pdf](http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/2017-1ta.pdf)
- National Technical Assistance Center on Transition, [https://transitionta.org/](https://transitionta.org/)
- National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability, [http://www.ncwd-youth.info/](http://www.ncwd-youth.info/)
THANK YOU

Amanda Green, Secondary Transition Coordinator

781-338-3368  agreen@doe.mass.edu
www.doe.mass.edu  75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
THANK YOU

Martha Daigle, Family Engagement Coordinator

781-338-3366
www.doe.mass.edu
mdaigle@doe.mass.edu
75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148