

Special Education Secondary Transition Planning and Engaging with Families



What is Secondary Transition: Special Education Services for Youth Ages 15-21?

It is the process of preparing students for adult life after they leave high school and can be thought of as a bridge between school programs and the opportunities of adult life, including higher education or training, employment, independent living and community participation.

How can schools, students and families work together for Secondary Transition planning?

Each grade level grouping outlines specific skills, milestones, and resources for students and families, serving as a simplified roadmap for Secondary Transition planning.

GRADES	SCHOOL	SCHOOL AND FAMILY PARTNERSHIP	STUDENT AND FAMILY
PK- 6 TH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Count money and make purchases Follow rules and norms Understand why people work Experience classroom jobs Confirm/connect family to Case Management Agency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify needs and wants Identify jobs of interests Identify likes at home and school Learn personal financial and literacy and civics basics Connect/continue Case Management Agency services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help with basic chores Gain independence in proper grooming and hygiene Experience a variety of community resources (parks, libraries, stores, recreation centers, etc.) Continue services with Case Management Agency
7 TH -8 TH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the upcoming shift to a Secondary Transition IEP Begin post-school/interest exploration Explore high school options and opportunities Introduce and teach essential & self-advocacy skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold/attend high school Q&A sessions Discuss appropriate high school services Consider elective options to explore vocational interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider school options Start/continue teaching independent living skills through chores and responsibilities Start/continue use of self-determination skills Reconnect/apply for services with Case Management Agency

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GRADES	SCHOOL	SCHOOL AND FAMILY PARTNERSHIP	STUDENT AND FAMILY
9 TH -10 TH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite student to IEP and coach to participate • Plan ongoing secondary transition assessment opportunities • Introduce Work-Based learning opportunities • Introduce DVR and SWAP and connect families to appropriate outside agencies. Invite to IEP as appropriate. • Discuss potential Concurrent Enrollment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student attends their IEP • Develop an IEP with a secondary transition lens • Identify attainable post-school goals • Initiate a course of study that aligns with post-school goals • Submit PSAT/SAT/ACT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquire a State ID and/or work towards a Driver's license • Learn about DVR/SWAP • Connect with your Case Management Agency • Consider volunteering at school or in the community • Consider independent living options
11 TH -12 TH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage student to participate in or lead IEP, if not already • Consider community and Work-Based learning opportunities aligned with post-school goals • Focus on student's post-school goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research post-school education options • Research disability access and workforce centers • Explore and learn how to advocate for job accommodations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-enroll in insurance options once student is 18 • Consider community resources (transportation, rec & leisure, etc.)
18-21 SERVICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure outside agency connections • Connect to braided services with outside agencies • Fade school-based services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-connect with Case Management Agency • Explore Age of Majority • Participate in independent of supported employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register to vote • Register for the draft • Consider legal and financial decisions

Secondary Transition Planning Resources

INDEPENDENT LIVING

- [Housing provider information](#)
- [List of Centers for Independent Living by State](#)

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- [The ARC Local Chapters \(Colorado\)](#)
- [Connections - Independent Living Assistance](#)
- [Office of Community Living](#)

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- [Post Secondary Ed Guide for Educators*](#)
- [Inclusive Higher Ed/College](#) for Students with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities

VOCATIONAL

- [What is DVR?](#)
- [DVR School Collaboration Ideas](#)
- [DVR Services Handbook](#)

LEGAL/FINANCIAL

- [Guardianship and Alternatives](#)
- [Colorado Able](#)
- [Scholarships for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Guardianship Alliance of Colorado](#)

GENERAL INFORMATION

- [Journey to Life after High School](#)
- [Disability Determination Services](#)
- [Colorado Department of Education/Secondary Transition webpage](#)
- [Colorado Department of Education/Transition Training for Parents](#)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) fully inform Administrative Units of Part B requirements and monitors the implementation of these requirements, with an emphasis on ensuring that all IDEA-eligible children in Colorado receive a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. Pursuant to its responsibility for general supervision, the CDE provides this guidance to support Administrative Units in satisfying their obligations under the IDEA. Administrative Units are encouraged to review their policies and procedures for alignment with this guidance and make changes, as needed. This guidance is not binding and should not be construed as legal advice. For legal advice, Administrative Units should consult their legal counsel.

