



AFC'S GUIDE TO

Transition Services & College Planning

HELPING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
MOVE FROM SCHOOL TO ADULTHOOD

April 2022



Advocates for Children of New York
Protecting every child's right to learn

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Transition Process

What are “transition services”?.....	3
Who is responsible for the transition process?	4
How do I know what transition services my child needs?	5
What rights do parents and students have during the transition process?	6
What are the DOE’s responsibilities in the transition process?	7
Transition on the IEP	8

Resources

What else should I consider?.....	14
Agencies providing services to people with disabilities	15
Applying to & getting support in college.....	16
Other supports and resources	18
Advocacy tips	21
Transition planning timeline	22

This guide does not constitute legal advice. This guide attempts to summarize existing policies or laws without stating the opinion of AFC. If you have a legal problem, please contact an attorney or advocate.

WHAT ARE TRANSITION SERVICES?

In New York, every student with a disability who has an IEP must get transition services by the time they turn 15. Transition services help students with disabilities prepare for life after high school. Your child's IEP should describe what your child wants to do after high school and what the school must do to help them prepare for adulthood.

Transition services can include:

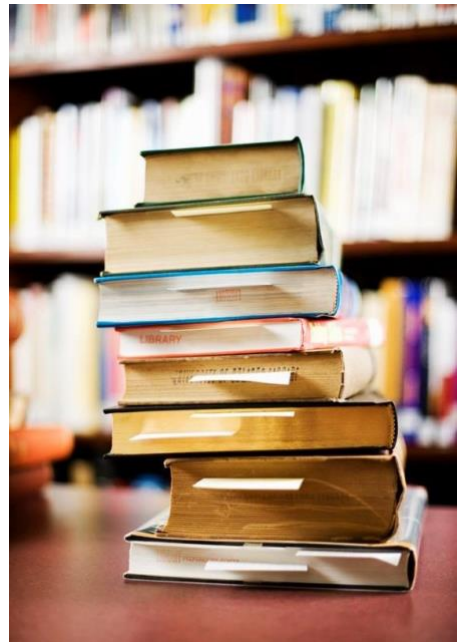
- Internships
- Volunteer opportunities
- Tutoring
- Vocational training
- Afterschool activities
- Help applying to college and financial aid
- Help applying to work programs for after high school
- Exploring different types of housing (including support with rent and living on your own)
- Help getting a driver's license or state ID
- Learning to use money

State and federal special education laws say that your child's school must review their transition services at least once a year at their IEP meeting. These services must be based on your child's needs and not just what the school has to offer.

If your child's IEP does not include transition services, ask for them in writing from the Committee on Special Education (CSE), IEP team, or the person in charge of special education at your child's school.

NOTE:

Adult disability services are very different from the services provided to students. There is no right to a job, day program or housing once your child leaves school, so **early planning is important!**



WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES?

Your home district is responsible for figuring out what transition services your child needs and for providing those services. Some schools in New York have a **Transition Coordinator**. If your child's school does not have a transition coordinator, these responsibilities will likely fall to the guidance counselor. Ask who at the school helps students with transition activities and arrange to meet with that person to discuss your child's transition process.

The IEP team should invite agencies that may provide services to your child during or after high school to their IEP meeting. If these outside agencies, like ACCES-VR, OPWDD, or OMH, do not attend the IEP meeting, the school must take steps to include them in the planning of any transition services. See pages 16-17 for more information about these agencies.



HOW DO I KNOW WHAT TRANSITION SERVICES MY CHILD NEEDS?

Transition services start with you and your child! The home district must evaluate your child to help you and the IEP team know what services your child needs to prepare for life after high school. You can ask the district for any assessment that may help the team figure out what services are appropriate for your child.

Consider requesting one or more of these assessments:

LEVEL I VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT

- The district should do this assessment annually beginning at age 12. It includes a student, parent, and teacher interview.
- For more information, see: www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/transition/level1careerassess.htm.

LEVEL II & III VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

- The district does not have to do these assessments unless you ask for them.
- These assessments are much longer than a Level I Vocational assessment. They are more in depth and use standardized tests.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY (OT)

An OT assessment can identify gaps in your child's independent living skills (such as getting dressed, organizing a binder, or managing time).

SPEECH-LANGUAGE THERAPY

This can identify gaps in self-advocacy and social skills.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY (AT)

An AT assessment can identify devices that can help your child earn, read, write or communicate. For more information about AT, see:

www.advocatesforchildren.org/sites/default/files/library/assistive_technology_guide.pdf.

Some questions to think about:

- How will your child support themselves?
- Where does your child want to live?
- What is your child's skills?

Who else can I ask about assessments?

You can also request additional assessments from your school, from an outside agency like ACCES-VR, from a local community-based organization, or private evaluator

WHAT RIGHTS DO PARENTS AND STUDENTS HAVE DURING THE TRANSITION PROCESS?

Parents have the right to be an active participant in IEP meetings. You can also invite other people to the IEP meeting who know your child and can provide support.

After age 14, your school will invite your child to participate in IEP meetings. You can tell the district whether you would like your child to participate in all or some of the meeting. Even if your child does not come to the meeting, the school must think about what your child wants to do after high school and what services they need to get there.

The school should also invite other agencies, like OPWDD or ACCES-VR, to the IEP meeting. These agencies can provide or pay for transition services. See pages 16-17 for more information about these agencies.

If you do not agree with the transition services in your child's IEP, ask to have the IEP changed. If that does not work, you can request new evaluations, mediation, or an impartial due process hearing. For more information about the impartial hearing process, see AFC's *Guide to Impartial Hearings* at https://www.advocatesforchildren.org/get-help/guides_and_resources/disability.



WHAT ARE THE DOE'S RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE TRANSITION PROCESS?

The district must:

- **Develop a transition plan for all students older than 14.** New York State law requires that a transition plan be developed for your child before they turn 15.
- **Include you and your child in transition planning.** The IEP meeting should be held at a time and location that is convenient for you. The district **must** invite your child to any IEP meeting that will consider transition services. State law requires that “if your child does not attend, the [school] district shall take steps to ensure that your child’s preferences and interests are considered.”
- **Develop appropriate and measurable post-secondary goals.** The law requires that your child’s transition goals be measurable. There must be some way to see your child’s progress toward the post-secondary and annual goals listed on their IEP. Without benchmarks to measure progress, it is nearly impossible to determine if the district’s transition services are benefiting your child.
- **Consider your child’s needs, strengths, preferences, and interests when developing post-secondary goals.** The IEP team must consider your child’s personal situation before developing long-term adult outcomes for them.
- **Discuss all possible graduation pathways.** New York State has many types of high school diplomas and exit credentials. The IEP team must talk to you and your child about all your child’s options.
- **Plan your child’s path to graduation.** The IEP should say which credentials or diploma your child is working towards. It should also describe your child’s progress towards that goal including the classes and exams that your child still needs to pass.

These high school diplomas & exit credentials are available to students in New York:

1. Regents Diploma
2. Advanced Regents Diploma
3. Local Diploma
4. Career Development and Occupational Skills (CDOS) Credential
5. Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential (SACC)

For more information, check out our graduation fact sheet: bit.ly/swdgrad

NOTE: This list does not include the High School Equivalency Diploma, often referred to as the GED.

TRANSITION ON THE IEP

Once your child turns 15, their IEP must include transition services. These services can appear in several different parts of the IEP including the sections labeled “Measurable Postsecondary Goals,” “Coordinated Set of Transition Activities,” and “Measurable Annual Goals.”



MEASURABLE POSTSECONDARY GOALS

What are Postsecondary Goals?

These are your child’s long-term plans for living, working and learning as an adult. These goals help you, your child, and the school district plan for activities and services needed to prepare your child for adulthood. Postsecondary Goals should address three areas: education and training; employment; and independent living skills.

BEGINNING NOT LATER THAN THE FIRST IEP TO BE IN EFFECT WHEN THE STUDENT IS AGE 15 (AND AT A YOUNGER AGE IF DETERMINED APPROPRIATE)
MEASURABLE POSTSECONDARY GOALS
LONG-TERM GOALS FOR LIVING, WORKING AND LEARNING AS AN ADULT
EDUCATION/TRAINING:
EMPLOYMENT:
INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS (WHEN APPROPRIATE):
TRANSITION NEEDS In consideration of present levels of performance, transition service needs of the student that focus on the student's courses of study, taking into account the student's strengths, preferences and interests as they relate to transition from school to post-school activities:

1. EDUCATION & TRAINING GOALS

These goals may include programs like career and technical education, job training, continuing and adult education, or college. These goals should answer the question, “Where will your child get the skills to become what he or she wants to be?”

Examples:

- Stacy will complete a training program as a Certified Nursing Assistant.
- Eddie will apply to both two-year and four-year colleges.
- Christina will enroll in a four-year college.
- Juan will volunteer at various job sites to develop job skills and determine personal interests.

2. EMPLOYMENT GOALS

These goals may include programs like supported employment or internships. Employment goals should answer the question, “How does your child want to earn a living?”

Examples:

- Barry will gain relevant job experience by working for at least one year in a retail store.
- Jasmine will explore career opportunities in the arts by interning at a local museum.

3. INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS GOALS

These goals should answer these questions: “How independently does your child plan to live after high school?” “What skills will they need to learn to live independently?”

Examples:

- Matthew will learn to travel on his own.
- Kenny will live in a supportive housing program.
- Keisha will live in a group home with full support.

Other questions to think about when filling out this section...

After graduation, your child is interested in participating in:

- ☐ Full-time/Part-time Job
- ☐ Vocational School/Training
- ☐ Supported Employment
- ☐ 2-Year College
- ☐ 4-Year College
- ☐ Military
- ☐ Other: _____

What kind of jobs interest your child?

What kinds of jobs does your child dislike?

What skills does your child need?

What kind of support does your child need to learn these skills?

COORDINATED SET OF TRANSITION ACTIVITIES

This part of the IEP should describe in-school and out-of-school experiences that will help your child transition to adulthood. The IEP team should discuss 6 types of transition activities:

- Instruction.
- related services.
- community experiences.
- development of employment and other post-adult living objectives.
- acquisition of daily living skills; and
- functional vocational assessments.

NOTE:

For each service or activity, the IEP should list the person who will carry out the activity. Someone specific at the school, or an outside agency or provider.

Outside agencies can and should be invited to attend IEP meetings where you will discuss transition services.

BEGINNING NOT LATER THAN THE FIRST IEP TO BE IN EFFECT WHEN THE STUDENT IS AGE 15 (AND AT A YOUNGER AGE, IF DETERMINED APPROPRIATE).		
COORDINATED SET OF TRANSITION ACTIVITIES		
NEEDED ACTIVITIES TO FACILITATE THE STUDENT'S MOVEMENT FROM SCHOOL TO POST-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES	SERVICE/ACTIVITY	SCHOOL DISTRICT/AGENCY RESPONSIBLE
Instruction		
Related Services		
Community Experiences		
Development of Employment and Other Post-school Adult Living Objectives		
Acquisition of Daily Living Skills (if applicable)		
Functional Vocational Assessment (if applicable)		

I. INSTRUCTION

This section should say what your child will be doing in the classroom to build the skills they need to reach their post-secondary goals. Instruction includes general or special education classes to meet the academic requirements of their college or career goals. It can include advanced placement courses, career and technical education, or remedial services.

Example: For a student struggling in math... “Darius will attend after-school tutoring 3 days a week to address math weaknesses. Darius will also complete 90% of math homework assignments.”

2. RELATED SERVICES

Related services help your child gain skills for work, school, and home. These services can include occupational or physical therapy, speech therapy, rehabilitative counseling services, assistive technology, travel training, or other professional supports.

Example: For a student who has difficulty traveling on her own... “Samantha will complete 50 hours of travel training between home and school and school and a community activity during the school year.”

3. COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES

These are activities in the community during school or after school to work toward your child’s transition goals. This can include volunteering, residential tours, college tours, recreation and leisure activities.

Example: For a student interested in cooking... “Tracy will volunteer at her church’s soup kitchen for at least 50 hours during the school year.”

4. DEVELOPMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND OTHER POST-SCHOOL ADULT LIVING OBJECTIVES

This area focuses on building work-related behaviors and skills for finding and keeping a job. This can include career planning, job shadowing, job training, or supported employment.

Example: For a student who is interested in health care... “Lisa will research ten posts-secondary programs in the health care field and write one-page evaluations of each program.”

5. ACQUISITION OF DAILY LIVING SKILLS

Daily living skills are the skills that your child needs to live independently. This can include dressing, grooming, hygiene, self-care, household chores, shopping, and managing finances.

Example: For a student interested in developing a more independent daily routine...
“Dennis will read time schedules, learn his address, and follow a weekly budget with 90% accuracy.”

Example: For a student who needs to develop basic daily living skills...
“Cassandra will practice basic daily living skills during school hours. This school year, she will attend school outings to practice using money and getting change, ordering from a menu, and selecting groceries.”

6. FUNCTIONAL VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT

The district usually does a Level I Vocational Assessment for this section. If that does not provide enough information about your child, consider asking for one (or more) of the assessments listed on page 5.

Other questions to think about when filling out this section...

What chores or responsibilities does your child have at home?

What other tasks would your child like to be able to do at home?

After graduation, your child will live:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> At home with you | <input type="checkbox"/> In an apartment with support |
| <input type="checkbox"/> In a group home | <input type="checkbox"/> In an independent apartment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

Your child needs more support with (check off all that apply):

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Getting dressed | <input type="checkbox"/> Health/first aid | <input type="checkbox"/> Social skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Laundry | <input type="checkbox"/> Traveling/getting around | <input type="checkbox"/> Reading |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preparing meals & nutrition | <input type="checkbox"/> Parenting/childcare | <input type="checkbox"/> Everyday math |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Managing money/ budgeting | <input type="checkbox"/> Time management/ organization | <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy relationships |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hygiene/grooming | <input type="checkbox"/> Safety | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-advocacy | <input type="checkbox"/> Sex education |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

MEASURABLE ANNUAL GOALS

The Measurable Annual Goals section of your child's IEP can also include transition goals. For more ideas about goals related to college, see page 15 of this guide.

ALTERNATE SECTION FOR STUDENTS WHOSE IEPs WILL INCLUDE SHORT-TERM INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES AND/OR BENCHMARKS (REQUIRED FOR PRESCHOOL STUDENTS AND/OR SCHOOL-AGE STUDENTS WHO MEET ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA TO TAKE THE NEW YORK STATE ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT)			
MEASURABLE ANNUAL GOALS			
THE FOLLOWING GOALS ARE RECOMMENDED TO ENABLE THE STUDENT TO BE INVOLVED IN AND PROGRESS IN THE GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM, ADDRESS OTHER EDUCATIONAL NEEDS THAT RESULT FROM THE STUDENT'S DISABILITY, AND PREPARE THE STUDENT TO MEET HIS/HER POSTSECONDARY GOALS.			
ANNUAL GOALS WHAT THE STUDENT WILL BE EXPECTED TO ACHIEVE BY THE END OF THE YEAR IN WHICH THE IEP IS IN EFFECT	CRITERIA MEASURE TO DETERMINE IF GOAL HAS BEEN ACHIEVED	METHOD HOW PROGRESS WILL BE MEASURED	SCHEDULE WHEN PROGRESS WILL BE MEASURED
			time per
SHORT-TERM INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES AND/OR BENCHMARKS (INTERMEDIATE STEPS BETWEEN THE STUDENT'S PRESENT LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE AND THE MEASURABLE ANNUAL GOAL):			

Examples:

Annual Goals	Criteria	Method	Schedule
In practice scenarios where he is purchasing an item, Josh will be able to provide correct change.	90% accuracy in practice scenarios	Teacher/ Provider Observations	3 times per quarter
By November 1, Kara will identify a SUNY essay topic and will write and revise a college application essay on this topic.	90% accuracy	Teacher review of written work	April: Identify topic Sept.: Complete draft Oct.: Revise draft with teacher feedback.

WHAT ELSE SHOULD I CONSIDER?

School Decision Making

In New York State, parents keep the right to make special education decisions for their children through the age of 21.

Adult Decision Making

Generally, at age 18, a person can make their own decisions about medical care, housing, and other legal matters. If your child will need support to make decisions about health or other personal needs, property, or finances, there are a few options to consider.

One way to support your child's adult decision-making is to assist them in designating you or another adult as their powers of attorney and/or healthcare proxy. For more information, check out this tip sheet from IncludeNYC: www.includenyc.org/resources/tip-sheet/supported-decision-making-an-alternative-to-guardianship.

Supported Decision-Making New York (SDMNY) operates a pilot program in NYC that helps families create supported decision-making agreements. For more information, visit sdmny.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/170509-Guardianship-and-Alternatives-FAQs.pdf. To sign up for the pilot program, fill out this online form: sdmny.org/contact-us/.

If your child has an intellectual or developmental disability and will not be able to make their own decisions when they turn 18, they may need you (or another person) to become their legal guardian. Article 17-A guardianship gives you the right to make decisions for your adult child. You must file for guardianship in court. You should begin the process early if you want guardianship in place when your child turns 18. For more information, visit www.nycourts.gov/courthelp/guardianship/17A.shtml.

If your child has or could have access to \$10,000 or more, you may also want to set up a Supplemental Needs Trust (also called a Special Needs Trust). This trust lets you save funds for your child without losing the right to benefits like Medicaid. For more information, check out this info sheet from the PACER Center: www.pacer.org/publications/possibilities/images/stories/contentpdfs/planning_your_childs_future/special_needs_trust.pdf.

AGENCIES THAT SERVE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Your child has the right to stay in school until they earn a diploma, or through the June after their 21st birthday, whichever comes first. There are state agencies that can help your child get training, education, or placement services when they leave school. Your child should be referred to these agencies during their last two years of school. Under law, the DOE must involve outside agencies in the transition process, but it is important for parents to make sure that this happens. Some agencies include:

Adult Career and Continuing Education Services — Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR)

ACCES-VR (formerly known as VESID) helps people with disabilities explore their job interests, find a job, and keep it. If you and your child are interested in these services, you have to apply. Your child's Transition Linkage Coordinator or other school personnel can help. For more information, visit www.acces.nysed.gov/vr or check out AFC's ACCES-VR tip sheet (www.advocatesforchildren.org/sites/default/files/library/applying_for_accesvr.pdf).

Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)

OPWDD provides services to people of all ages with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Many children with IEP classifications of Intellectual Disability (ID), Multiple Disabilities (MD), or Autism qualify for these services.

If you believe that your child qualifies for OPWDD services and has not been receiving them, you should complete an application as soon as possible. For more information, visit www.opwdd.ny.gov/ or check out AFC's OPWDD guide (www.advocatesforchildren.org/sites/default/files/library/applying_for_opwdd.pdf).

Office of Mental Health (OMH)

OMH provides various services, including mental health counseling, to people with mental health disabilities. OMH can refer your child to educational, vocational, or life skills training, housing, and employment supports. For more information, visit: www.omh.ny.gov/omhweb/consumer_affairs/transition_youth/resources/.

Social Security Administration (SSA)

SSA operates the programs that give federal benefits to people of any age with a significant mental or physical disability. These benefits include Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Plans to Achieve Self-Support (PASS), Medicaid, and Medicare. For more information, check out AFC's SSI fact sheet (www.advocatesforchildren.org/sites/default/files/library/ssi_fact_sheet.pdf) or visit: www.ssa.gov.

TIP!

People with a qualifying disability, such as a cognitive or mobility impairment, are eligible for reduced fare MetroCard. For more information, visit the MTA website at www.mta.info/nyct/fare/rfindex.htm.

APPLYING TO & GETTING SUPPORT IN COLLEGE

Your child's transition plan can include goals and services to help them select and apply to colleges. Try to visit the colleges your child is interested in attending. Ask your child's school about field trips to visit colleges. Your child should ask questions about how each college can support their individual learning needs. If your child meets a college or university's admission requirements, the college or university **cannot deny** your child admission simply because they have a disability. For more information, visit: www.thinkcollege.net and www.thecollegesolution.com/college-admissions-and-learning-disabilities/.

Typical college applications require:

RECOMMENDATIONS

Colleges usually require up to four recommendations from teachers, coaches or mentors. Your child should pick people who know them well and give them plenty of time to write the recommendation before it is due.

PERSONAL ESSAY

Your child will need to write at least one personal essay. They should start early and should show the essay to teachers and counselors to ask for feedback.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Many colleges require your child to send in SAT or ACT scores. Your child's guidance counselor can help them sign up for these tests and apply for a fee waiver. For more information about fee waivers see: sat.collegeboard.org/register/sat-fee-waivers or media.act.org/documents/feewaiver.pdf.

If your child needs accommodations on College Board tests like AP exams, the SAT, and ACT, this must be approved by the College Board. Your child should apply for accommodations *at least six months* before taking the exam. See: www.collegeboard.com/ssd/student/index.html.

NOTE:

Students who get SAT or ACT fee waivers can also get waivers for college application fees through their guidance or college counselor.

Getting support at college

If your child has a disability, they may be able to receive special accommodations in college, but you need to apply for them and have supporting documents (like recent evaluations and letters from doctors). **Your child will not automatically get accommodations in college.** Your child is responsible for asking for support.

Every college has an accessibility or disability office that sets up accommodations. Your child should contact this office to identify themselves as a student with a disability and request the accommodations that they need *before* classes begin.

Examples of possible accommodations include:

- separate test taking locations.
- extended time on tests.
- note taker in class.
- tests given in a larger format.
- priority registration; or
- reduced or substituted course load.

If your child has difficulty getting accommodations in college, they should:

- Talk to the faculty member teaching the class.
- Get help from the Office of Disability Services (ODS) staff at the college.
- Go to administrators in the academic department or at the Dean's office.
- Research the school's internal grievance procedure and work with the ODS to follow it.
- If nothing else works, in some cases, you can file complaints with the US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights or the US Department of Justice. Learn more about your rights at www.hhs.gov/ocr.

OTHER SUPPORTS AND RESOURCES

Transition planning can be hard, but there are many resources available to support parents and young adults throughout the process.

These people or agencies may help your family make it through the transition process:

- Postsecondary education and training programs, such as representatives from colleges, universities or trade schools
- Advocacy organizations, including disability-specific organizations like United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) or Quality Services for the Autism Community (QSAC)
- Community based agencies
- Employers from your community
- The Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD)
- Housing agency representatives
- Residential service providers
- The United Way
- Your local YMCA or YWCA

Independent Living Centers are all over NYC; each center offers different types of programs to help adults with disabilities become independent. They can help your child find jobs, housing and benefits. For more information, visit www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/independent-living-centers.

Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) is a program through the county and/or city Mayor's office that helps youth ages 14 – 24 get work experience, life skills training and income during the summer months. Not all students who apply for SYEP get accepted. For more information contact your school district, county, and/or city office for application.

Client Assistance Program (CAP) is a statewide network of advocates that help New Yorkers with disabilities get the training, equipment and services they need to be employed. They also help mediate disputes between clients and rehabilitation services agencies or facilities. For more information, visit www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/do/cap.htm or call (212) 674-2300.

HELPFUL WEBSITES & DOCUMENTS

Career Zone

careerzone.ny.gov/views/careerzone/index.jsf

This online tool can help your child explore possible career paths to identify careers related to their individual strengths, skills and talents.

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities

nichcy.org/wp-content/uploads/docs/ts10.pdf

This organization's guide, "Transition Planning: A Team Effort" offers creative ways to think about transition planning and includes a long list of nation-wide resources at the end.

College Application Timeline

www.campusexplorer.com/college-advice-tips/6BCDBA67/High-School-Senior-Timeline-and-Checklist/

This checklist can help college bound students stay on track in their last year of high school.

Services for CUNY Students with Disabilities

www2.cuny.edu/employment/student-jobs/students-with-disabilities/

Going to College

www.going-to-college.org/index.html

This website helps students as they go through each step of the college process, from applying to advocating for themselves in school.

Assistive Technology (AT) for the Transitioning Young Adult

docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/49b0c3_ceb7d2e6863a4b77b248b3748c770ead.pdf

High School Promotion and Graduation Requirements

<http://www.nysed.gov/curriculum-instruction/general-education-and-diploma-requirements>

Filling out the FAFSA

www.understandingfafsa.org/

ID Erie County

<https://www2.erie.gov/clerk/index.php?q=auto-bureau>

FREE/LOW-COST SAT & ACT PREP TOOLS

- majortests.com/sat/
- number2.com
- brightstorm.com/
- www.actstudent.org/testprep/
- needapencil.ck12.org/
- sat.collegeboard.org/practice

SCHOLARSHIPS/FINANCIAL AID SUPPORT

Scholarships for New Yorkers

- Excelsior Scholarship: This can provide free SUNY/CUNY Tuition for families who make less than \$125,000 per year: www.ny.gov/programs/tuition-free-degree-program-excelsior-scholarship. Note that student **must** be able to finish them Bachelor's Degree in 4 year or associate degree in 2 years or the scholarship becomes a loan.

Scholarships for students with disabilities:

- www.collegescholarships.org/disabilities.htm
- specialchildren.about.com/od/specialneedsscholarships/tp/Special-Needs-Scholarships.htm
- www.finaid.org/otheraid/disabled.phtml/



COLLEGE APPLICATION MENTORING & ADVISING

- Speak to your Guidance Counselor
- Meet with College representatives that come to your school
- Attend College nights

ADVOCACY TIPS

- ✓ Be **involved** in every step of the transition process.
- ✓ Keep lines of **communication** open with the people who deal with your child. Provide positive as well as negative feedback. Even when you are angry about something that has happened, try to **speak calmly** when making your point.
- ✓ **Keep things in writing!** Keep a notebook for yourself of all communications with school personnel and outside clinicians. Follow up on conversations with written confirmation.
- ✓ Always work toward **solutions** when there is a problem. Work with your child's teachers to create positive plans for change to correct any problem that exists.
- ✓ Send all important information by **certified mail, return receipt requested or in person**. Keep copies of all documents for yourself.
- ✓ Keep a **transition folder** with all your documents about your child's transition process.
- ✓ Attend **information sessions** on transition services held by your child's school or outside agencies.
- ✓ **Direct all questions** about the transition process **to a school official** such as your child's guidance counselor or transition linkage coordinator.
- ✓ Get to know **the relevant outside agencies** to learn what services are available for your child.
- ✓ Ask about the **requirements and limitations of the different diploma options**.
- ✓ Set **realistic goals**.
- ✓ Keep in mind that the **Annual Goals** portion of the IEP should match the **postsecondary goals and transition services** listed.
- ✓ Know **your rights** and the **district's responsibilities** during the transition process.
- ✓ **Be persistent**. If someone says there is nothing that can be done for your child, get a second opinion.
- ✓ **Bring along a friend**, family member, clinician, or someone who knows your child outside of school-to-school meetings if you feel your perspective is not being heard by the district.

TRANSITION TIMELINE

This timeline guides you through the transition process and some actions that you and your child might need to take. Please note that not every box will apply to you and your child.

Age	Tasks
12-14 Vocational Assessment Date: _____ IEP Meeting date: _____ We created goals for: <input type="checkbox"/> Academics <input type="checkbox"/> Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Advocacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Social Skills <input type="checkbox"/> Career Exploration
15 My child has _____/22 credits	<input type="checkbox"/> My child talked about transition with the IEP Team <input type="checkbox"/> I know how many credits and Regents exams my child needs to graduate <input type="checkbox"/> My child signed up for the PSAT My child has: <input type="checkbox"/> An ID Card (NYCID or State ID) <input type="checkbox"/> A bank account
16 My child has _____/22 credits	<input type="checkbox"/> My child is preparing for Regents exams <input type="checkbox"/> My child signed up for the SAT/ACT My child has thought about: <input type="checkbox"/> Vocational programs <input type="checkbox"/> College <input type="checkbox"/> Getting a job <input type="checkbox"/> Day program through OPWDD Summer employment: <input type="checkbox"/> Summer Job <input type="checkbox"/> SYEP <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer My child has access to their: <input type="checkbox"/> Birth Certificate <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security Card <input type="checkbox"/> Working Papers

17

My child has
_____/22
credits

- ☐ I know how many credits and Regents exams my child needs to graduate
- ☐ My child has met with a college counselor
- ☐ I have started the Supported Decision Making/Guardianship process for my child

My child knows about:

- ☐ ACCES-VR
- ☐ Medicaid
- ☐ Social Security

18– 21

My child has
_____/22
credits

- My child will graduate with a:
- ☐ Regents Diploma
 - ☐ Advanced Regents Diploma
 - ☐ Local Diploma
 - ☐ CDOS Credential
 - ☐ SACC

My child knows if they can get benefits:

- ☐ SSI
- ☐ SNAP (food stamps)
- ☐ Cash Assistance
- ☐ Supported Housing

My child:

- ☐ Knows how to travel on their own
- ☐ Needs to be travel trained
- ☐ Can/will use paratransit

My child:

- ☐ Has a bank account
- ☐ Can manage money on their own
- ☐ Needs help managing money

My child has goals in place for the future and knows what to do to get there:

- ☐ Jobs/Volunteering
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Housing
- ☐ Relationships

My child:

- ☐ Can make their own decisions
- ☐ Needs help making decisions
- ☐ My child has registered for Selective Service (men only)
- ☐ My child is registered to vote

**After
Graduation**

- ☐ My child has financial aid for college
- ☐ My child has a place to live
- ☐ My child knows that they may have to get their own health insurance when they turn 26

My child is involved with:

- ☐ ACCES-VR
- ☐ OPWDD
- ☐ Job training program



Our Mission

Advocates for Children of New York (AFC)'s mission is to ensure a high-quality education for New York students who face barriers to academic success, focusing on students from low-income backgrounds. AFC achieves this through four integrated strategies:

- Free advice and legal representation for families of students.
- Free trainings and workshops for parents, communities, and educators and other professionals, to equip them to advocate on behalf of students.
- Policy advocacy to effect change in the education system and improve education outcomes; and
- Impact litigation to protect the right to quality education and to compel needed education reform.

Still have more questions? Please call the Jill Chaifetz Education Helpline:

Monday through Thursday

10 am to 4 pm

866-427-6033 (toll free)

Advocates for Children of New York, Inc.

151 West 30th Street, 5th Floor

New York, NY 10001

Phone • 212-947-9779

Fax • 212-947-9790

info@advocatesforchildren.org

www.advocatesforchildren.org

 [/advocatesforchildren](https://www.facebook.com/advocatesforchildren)

 [@AFCNewYork](https://twitter.com/AFCNewYork)

 [@AFCNewYork](https://www.instagram.com/AFCNewYork)