



Support for Caregivers Navigating the IEP Process
An Offering of the Chris Walsh Center for Educators and Families of MetroWest
Week 5: March 30, 2023

Welcome

Mission statement of Chris Walsh Center

To provide information for families and educators about the continuum of educational support available to students with disabilities, students who are gifted, and students with unmet needs. The center will offer support, workshops and other programming for families, educators, student support professionals, administrators, and advocates in the MetroWest area. The center also will engage in scholarly research, educator preparation, and professional development.

Purpose of the Group

Provide accurate, objective information for people to learn and use or apply to their own individual situation. We welcome questions about the process or the information presented but please refrain from asking questions about how the information we present should or might be applied to individual circumstances.

Group guidelines and expectations

- Confidential safe space
 - Don't expect answers to specific questions
 - Respect each other's confidentiality
 - Share ideas not names
 - It's expected that we have different experiences. We're here to listen, inform, not advise or judge
 - Assume good intentions



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Topic: Transition Planning, College and Career

Introductions

Ice breaker

Questions and Review of Last Week: What to Do with Proposed 504 or IEP

Outstanding Questions

Goal of Transition Planning:

“A truly successful transition process is the result of comprehensive team planning that is driven by the dreams, desires and abilities of youth. A transition plan provides the basic structure for preparing an individual to live, work and play in the community, as fully and independently as possible.” (PACER Center Inc., 2001)

Transition Planning for Students on 504 Plans

- There are no formal transition services or processes for students who have 504s
- The school 504 plan ends upon graduation from high school
- Transition Planning is incumbent upon parents/students and could include
 - Identifying the point person for applying for accommodations with the College Board for SATs and AP courses and ACT (many times a 504 Coordinator for the School)
 - Identifying state or federal agencies related to a student’s disability that a student and/or family could connect to for support such as the MA Commission for the Blind, Mass Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, etc.
 - Communicating with disability services/human resources at college/workplace
- Accommodations can be received after high school in college or work per the ADA and/or The Rehab Act of 1973 (Subpart E)
 - An individual is responsible for disclosing the disability to the workplace or to the college/university
 - Accommodations must be requested through the process identified by the place of employment or the college

Transition Planning for Students on IEPs

[Information from MA DOE about Transitioning from Special Education Transition Planning Form](#)



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- When a student on an IEP turns 14, a district must provide the student with transition planning and services, and they must officially invite them to take part in IEP Team meetings.
 - Transition planning services are activities that are based on the individual student's needs, taking into account his/her strengths, preferences, interests, and skill levels.
 - intended to prepare students with disabilities to move from school to post-school life such that as young adults they will live, work, and/or go to postsecondary school as independently as possible when they leave public school.
 - As part of the annual review of the IEP once a student is 14, the team must utilize a [Transition Planning Form](#), which is a part of the IEP and which describes the student's post-secondary goals and the skills needed to achieve these goals.
 - **Post-secondary Vision**
 - **Disability Related Skills** that require IEP goals and related services
 - **Action Plan** - should outline how the student can develop self-determination skills and be academically and functionally prepared to transition to post-school activities to achieve his/her post-secondary. Parts of the Action Plan include:
 1. **Instruction: Is there a course of study or specific courses needed that will help the student reach his/her post-secondary vision?**
 - general education courses and/or special education instruction,
 - career and technical education, and/or
 - vocational training or
 - community college.
 2. **Employment: Are there employment opportunities and/or specific skills that will help the student reach his/her post-secondary vision?**
 - part-time employment,
 - supported job placement,
 - service learning projects,
 - work experience program,
 - job shadowing,
 - internships,
 - practice in resume writing/interviewing skills,
 - job specific skills in areas such as customer service, technology, etc.
 3. **Community Experiences/Post-School Adult Living: Are there certain types of community and/or adult living experiences**



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that will help the student reach his/her post-secondary vision?

- participation in community-based experiences,
 - learning how to independently access community resources,
 - building social relationships,
 - managing money,
 - understanding health care needs,
 - utilizing transportation options and organizational skills.
- [Chapter 688 as a part of Transition Planning](#)
 - Chapter 688 is a part of the Acts of 1983 aka the “Turning 22 Law”.
 - For students who turn 16 and who are expected to or will still require services beyond age 22, the district must also complete a [Chapter 688 referral](#) to the appropriate agency (Referrals to Mass Rehab Commission, Department of Developmental Disabilities, and/or Department of Mental Health, etc.).
 - Eligibility for a Chapter 688 referral requires 3 things:
 1. Receiving Special Education Services paid for by the school district
 2. In need of continuing services because of the severity of the disability
 3. Unable to work 20 hours per week or more in competitive employment (without specialized supports) at the time of leaving school

Note: An individual is automatically eligible for Chapter 688 services if he or she receives Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Income (SSDI), or is registered with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind
 - Local educational agencies (LEAs) and State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies participate in planning meetings
 1. Assist students and family members to make critical decisions about this stage of the student’s life and his or her future post-school goals.
 2. During the [Chapter 688 planning process](#), schools and VR agencies work together to identify the transition needs of students with disabilities, such as
 - the need for assistive or rehabilitation technology,
 - orientation and mobility services or travel training, and



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- career exploration through vocational assessments or work experience opportunities.
- A Student's IEP ends upon graduation from high school or when the student turns 22 whichever comes first
 - [Summary of Performance Upon Transitioning Off of the IEP](#)

[Comprehensive Quick Reference Guide to All Things 504 and IEP](#)
[DOE Postsecondary Guide to Transition](#)

Specific Information for Transition to College

IEPs do not exist in college - no modifications of curriculum

504s from high school do not apply to college (Subpart D)

Accommodations in college exist to provide equal access to curriculum (Subpart E)

- Have to self-disclose once accepted and then self-advocate to use the accommodations approved
- How the school shares accommodations varies so need to learn how to access the accommodations and then use them independently

Develop awareness of skills that will be required to succeed in college and start developing those skills; consider options for what the right next step after college is

- [Considerations for Life After High School](#)
- Great Resources for Parents and Students in Understanding the Process and Skills Needed
 - Elizabeth Hamblet at ldadvisory.com
 - [7 Steps to College Success](#)
 - Perry LaRoque
 - [Taking Flight](#)

Options to facilitate the transition

- Summer Bridge programs
 - Ex: [Summer Programs at Landmark College](#), [UMASS Lowell Cares Horizons program](#)
 - [Mitchell on Thames](#)
 - Private Bridge programs by Colleges themselves for incoming students (ex/ [McDaniel College](#)),
 - and/or Bootcamps or Programs offered by private coaching companies, etc.
 - [Semester Off](#), [Focus Collegiate](#)



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- Schools for Students with Learning Disabilities
 - [Landmark College](#), [Beacon College](#)
- Gap Semester/Year to allow for maturity and skill development
 - Can apply during senior year and defer, or
 - Apply during the gap semester/year
 - Specific Programs
 - [SOAR](#), [Dynamy](#), [CIP](#), [Semester Off](#), etc.
 - Consultants can help with this
 - [J2Guides.com](#), [Gap Year Solutions](#), etc.
- Sub-Separate Scaffolded Living Opportunities While Going to College
 - [Mansfield Hall](#), [Summit Campus](#), etc.
- 2 year college options for students with disabilities such as
 - Middlesex Community College: [Transition Program](#),
 - MassBay Community College: [Transitional Scholars Program](#),
 - North Shore Community College: [Bridges to the Future](#),
 - Riverview School GROW Program with Cape Cod Community College (Sandwich, MA) www.riverviewschool.org
 - Salem State University: [EMBARK](#)
- College pay-as-you-go or grant programs on the campuses themselves
 - Curry - [PAL program](#)
 - Dean - [Arch Learning support and other supports](#)
 - [Landmark \(VT\)](#)
 - [Mitchell \(CT\)](#)
 - [Beacon \(FL\)](#)
 - UMASS Lowell [CARES](#)
 - Westford State and the [Banacos Learning Disabilities Program](#)
 - Merrimack College [Academic Success Programs](#)
 - Pace University - [Oasis Program](#)
 - And so many more
- Private 1:1 coaching while in high school and college to provide support, build skills, and accountability towards the goals the student has
 - Ex. [2tametheshamE](#), and many others