



Special Education: The Basics

Center for Change in Transition Services (CCTS)
Improving post-school outcomes for students with disabilities in Washington state
www.seattleu.edu/ccts

Legislation for Individuals with Disabilities

- Education for All Handicapped Children Act - Public Law 94-142 (1972)
 - Re-Authorizations:
 - o 1986 – more say for parents in the development of the IEP
 - o 1990 – added TBI, Autism and Transition
 - o 1997 – access to same curriculum as non disabled peers - changed to IDEA
 - o 2004 – early intervention, greater accountability, increased standards for teachers
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973)
- American with Disabilities Act (1990)

7 Core principles of IDEA

- Zero Reject
- Appropriate Evaluation/Assessment
- Free & Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
- Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
- Parent (and student if appropriate) participation in the decision-making process
- Procedural Safeguards (Due Process)

Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

- **Free** - means that all eligible students with disabilities will be educated at public expense.
- **Appropriate** – means a student with a disability is entitled to an education that is appropriate to him/her.
- **Public** – refers to public school system.
- **Education** – must be provided to every eligible school-aged child with a disability.

A plan "reasonably calculated to enable the child to receive educational benefits" or one where the child actually "makes progress toward the goals set forth in her IEP".

How Does a Student Become Eligible for SE?

- Student is referred
 - Can be referred by teacher, parent, student, other professionals
 - ChildFind (WAC 392-172-100) – The School District has the duty to locate, evaluate, and identify students with a suspected disability
 - Extends to students in private schools
 - Must identify "highly mobile" students with disabilities, including homeless and migrant students
 - Must ID students even if advancing from grade to grade
 - Youth that are incarcerated

How Does a Student Become Eligible for SE? (Cont'd)

- Process
 - Information is gathered
 - Decision to evaluate (or not) is made
 - Notice to parents
 - Consent
 - Evaluation
- In order to qualify for special education services, a student must have (3 pronged test):
 - An identified disability,
 - Disability impacts school performance,
 - In need of specially designed instruction (SDI).

14 Categories in WA

- Autism
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- Deaf-Blindness
- Developmentally Delayed
- Emotional Behavioral Disability
- Hearing Impaired
- Intellectual Disability
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment/Blindness

Visit the [Special Education Support](#) center for definitions.

IDEA Services

- A full evaluation in every area of suspected disability (e.g. eye exam, hearing, physical, psychological testing, learning disability testing) – *re-evaluated every three years*
- An individualized education program that meets the specific learning needs of the student, and requires the full involvement of the parent and student – a team approach to planning. – *written annually*

IDEA Services (continued)

- Accommodations
- Modifications
- Extended school year (ESY).
- Mobility aides and orientation (e.g. help getting from class to class).
- Transition services (planning and preparation for post high school settings-required).

IEP Development

- The IEP is developed by a team of professionals, including the parent who meet at least annually to develop an IEP and includes:
 - At least one general education teacher of the student;
 - At least one special education teacher of the student;
 - The parent(s);
 - A representative of the Local Education Agency (LEA); *
 - An individual who can interpret instructional implications of the evaluation;*
 - Student, if transition is discussed;
 - At the discretion of the parent or the school, others who have knowledge of or expertise regarding the student.
- *this role can be covered by another member of the team

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What's in an IEP ?

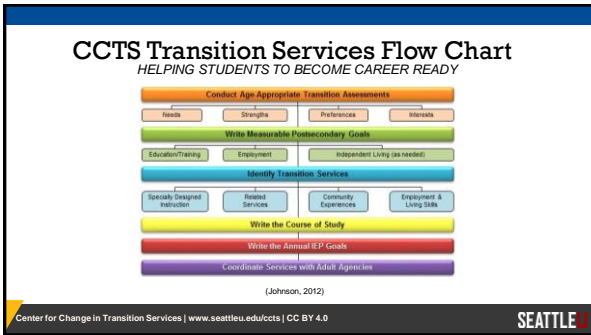
- **Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance**, describing how the student is currently doing in school and how the disability affects his or her involvement and progress in the general curriculum;
- **Transition services** for students turning 16 or above unless determined by the IEP team that the services should start earlier;
- **Annual goals** for the student, meaning what parents and the school team think he or she can reasonably accomplish in a year;
- **Special education and related services** to be provided to the student, including supplementary aids and services (assistive technology) and changes to the program or supports for school personnel;
- **LRE** - how much of the school day the student will be educated separately from nondisabled peers or not participate in extracurricular or other nonacademic activities such as lunch or clubs.

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What's in an IEP ? (continued)

- How (and if) the student is to **participate in state and district-wide assessments**, including what modifications to tests the student needs
- When **services** and modifications will **begin**, **how often** they will be provided, **where** they will be provided, and **how long** they will last
- How school personnel will **measure the student's progress** toward the annual goals.

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Age Appropriate Assessments

- **Ongoing process** of collecting data, from **multiple sources**, on the individual's needs, strengths, preferences and interests as they relate to educational, work, personal, living and social environments.
- The measurable postsecondary goals, supporting annual goals, transition services, and agency connections are **developed or confirmed** by this assessment information which is **updated and reviewed at least annually**.

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Post Secondary Goals

Education/Training: Community or technical college (2-year program); College/university (4-year program); College preparatory program; High school completion or certificate class; Short-term education or employment training (Job Corps, Vocational Rehabilitation, military...); Vocational technical school; or On-the-job training

Employment: Competitive or Supported

Independent Living: Those skills or tasks that contribute to the successful independent functioning of an individual in the following domains: leisure/recreation; home maintenance; personal care; community participation

After high school, Todd will receive on the job training in the food services industry at a local restaurant..

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What Does the Research Say?

Predictors of Post-School Success (NTACT, n.d.)

Research-Based	Promising
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Inclusion in General EducationOccupational CoursesPaid Work ExperienceSelf-Care/Independent Living SkillsTransition ProgramVocational EducationWork StudyYouth Autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Career AwarenessCommunity ExperiencesExit Exam Requirements/High School Diploma StatusInteragency CollaborationParental InvolvementProgram of StudySelf-Advocacy/Self-DeterminationSocial SkillsStudent Support

Course of Study

- Courses of Study refer to a description or list of academic courses that the student will complete each year that support the achievement of his/her individual post-secondary goals.
- Courses of study:
 - Focus on improving academic and functional achievement to support post-school goals.
 - Facilitate movement from school to post school by aligning curriculum with identified transition outcomes.
 - Combined from first year to final year of transition planning = coordinated set of activities.

Adapted from Step Four: Design a Transition Plan That Includes Courses of Study and Services and Activities, 2011

Annual Goals: PS Goals vs. Annual Goals

Postsecondary Goals

Student's identified goals for **after** the student leaves high school, and must address post-school education/training, employment, and (if appropriate) independent living skills.

Annual Goals

The annual IEP goals address what the student will accomplish **during** that particular school year in each identified area of service.

Annual Goals

Postsecondary Goal: After graduation, Bob will attend a community college for a degree in auto mechanics.

Annual IEP Goal: Using technical manuals relating to auto mechanics, Bob will answer comprehension questions (what, how, why), improving technical reading comprehension skills from 30% accuracy to 90% accuracy by (date) as measured by teacher collected data.

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Agency Linkages

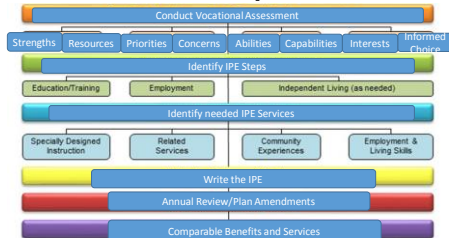
- School staff need to be knowledgeable about the services and policies of community agencies in order to invite the appropriate people
- Individual student needs drive the decision of when to invite agency personnel.
- Agency personnel can: develop relationship with teachers; provide information about services; help align the IEP and the IPE; talk with the student directly about needs; know the reason you are at the IEP (information, barriers, etc.)

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CGTS DVR Flowchart overlay



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How are schools set up?

- OSPI
- ESD
- Local School Districts
- High Schools
- Teachers
- School Counselors

Recommendations

- Agencies **must** be invited when committing the agency to providing funds of services.
- Obtain permission to invite agency personnel from the parent or adult student. **(Required!)**
- Invite the agency personnel **well in advance** of the meeting date.
- Indicate what their role will be in the meeting (informational, activity based, eligibility application, etc.).
- Include the agency person in the conversation especially when discussing post-school goals.

Where Can DVR Help?

- Turn to your elbow neighbor and:
 - Identify what skills and strengths you can bring to the table
 - Community knowledge?
 - Resources?
 - Planning strategies?
 - IPE information?

CCTS Contact

CCTS General Information

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