



Transition Bill of Rights

For Parents of Students Receiving Special Education Services

A student with an individualized education program (IEP) has certain rights under both federal and state laws. This *Transition Bill of Rights* for parents of students receiving special education will help parents and students understand a student's rights related to getting an education and other important issues regarding the transition to life after high school. School districts will provide this document annually at a planning and placement team (PPT) meeting to all parents, guardians, and surrogate parents of students who are receiving special education services in Grades 6-12 as well as to students who are 18 years of age or older.

Students, parents, guardians, and surrogate parents are important members of the PPT. Parents, guardians, surrogate parents, and students 18 years of age or older have the right to receive a copy of *Procedural Safeguards in Special Education* which explains the rights and responsibilities in the federal law called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). These procedural safeguards are provided at least annually at a PPT meeting by each school district. This publication describes a student's right to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) through specialized instruction and related services in a student's IEP.

Students with an IEP have a right to:

1. Receive secondary transition services through their IEP starting at least at age 16, or younger if desired and recommended by the student's PPT.
2. Receive appropriate individualized education services through the end of the school year in which they turn 21 OR until graduation with a regular high school diploma. The school year is defined as July 1 through June 30. This decision is typically recommended by a student's PPT.
3. Attend all PPT meetings, including those related to transition planning, to represent their education/training, employment, and independent living interests, preferences, and strengths.
4. Assist in the development of their IEP with accommodations and modifications designed to meet their unique needs.
5. Develop realistic and specific post-school outcome goal statements (PSOGs) that are measurable, based on their individualized needs and interests, and reviewed annually as part of their IEP.
6. Receive secondary transition services and related supports to help them prepare to meet their post-school goals in postsecondary education/training AND employment, and independent living skills if appropriate.
7. Assist in developing annual goals and objectives to include but not be limited to those areas in the *Connecticut CORE Transition Skills*, such as health care, transportation, self-determination, and social skills.
8. Identify, explore, and connect with outside agencies as appropriate, including but not limited to the following adult service agencies: Department of Developmental Services (DDS), Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), Department of Public Health (DPH), and the Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS), which includes the Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB) and Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) (see *Easing into Secondary Transition*).
9. Be informed on or before their 17th birthday that all parental rights will transition to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18. Under Connecticut law, students may notify the school district (in writing) that their parents, guardian, or surrogate parent shall continue to have the right to make educational decisions with the students when they turn 18.

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10. Request consideration for receiving transition-only services between the ages of 18 and 21 if all transition goals and objectives have not been met during their previous years in high school. The following conditions are required:

- a. Students have met all academic requirements for graduation.
- b. PPT makes the recommendation for transition-only services that must be reviewed at least annually.
- c. Transition-only services must be a coordinated set of individualized activities but do not need to be a specialized "program."
- d. Transition-only services must provide students with the opportunity to spend at least 80 percent of their time with nondisabled peers.
- e. Students are entitled to participate in graduation activities upon completion of academic requirements or at the conclusion of transition-only services - this is a decision to be made by the student, parents, and/or guardians or surrogate and the PPT.
- f. If students participate in transition-only services, the date on their diploma or certificate will be the date that they exit high school (either aging out at 21 or with a diploma or certificate).

In addition, the following should also be considered:

- g. Transition-only services are typically discussed during the senior year of high school.
- h. Transition-only services are not needed for graduation but may include academic,

vocational, and independent living activities that will help students meet their post-school goals.

- i. Transition-only services should be based in the local community to the greatest extent possible in order to prepare students for life after high school.

11. Actively participate in the development and revision of their Student Success Plans, which are required for all students in grades 6–12 to address career, academic, and social/emotional/behavioral skills to prepare for life after high school.

12. Receive, along with their parents, guardians, and surrogate parent transition resources and other information regarding IEPs developed by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) and their school such as:

- *Assistive Technology and Postsecondary Transition*
- *Building A Bridge: A Transition Manual for Students*
- *Connecticut CORE Transition Skills*
- *Connecticut IEP Transition Planning Checklist*
- *Easing into Secondary Transition: A Comprehensive Guide to Resources and Services in CT*
- *Transition Assessment Resource Manual*
- *Stepping Forward: A Self-Advocacy Guide for Middle and High School Students*
- *Student Success Plan Crosswalk*
- *Technology & Transition: Resource Guide to Creating and Sustaining an AT [Assistive Technology] Team at the High School Level*

If students have questions or have a problem asserting any of these rights, they should first speak to their teacher, school case manager, school counselor, and parent/guardian or surrogate parent. If additional help is needed, students (or their parents, guardians, or surrogate parent) have the right to file a complaint, ask for mediation and, if needed, ask for an impartial due process hearing by contacting the CSDE Due Process Unit at 860-713-6928. For more information, download a copy of the publication *Parent's Guide to Special Education* or obtain a copy from the school.

For additional help with transition or special education, call the CSDE at 860-713-6910 or visit <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/specialeducation>. For assistance in understanding the provisions of the IDEA, call Connecticut's federally designated Parent Training and Information Center, the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC) at 800-445-2722, e-mail cpac@cpacinc.org, or visit <http://www.cpacinc.org/>.