

Transition Programming for Students Between the Ages of 18 and 21

explanation, guidance and direction

Students on an Individual Education Plan may need continued instruction beyond the 12th grade. When this is required, Transition Programs may be an option. Transition Programs are designed for students between the ages of 18 and 21 with unmet IEP goals. In these programs, students are provided instruction in accordance to the IEP goals as listed on their Individual Education Plan. 18-21 Programs can provide comprehensive integrated supports to assist students in exploring career and employment options and successfully attaining the goals of their individualized education plan. The overarching goal of these programs is to improve post-school outcomes for youth with disabilities, including employment, postsecondary education and independent living.

Considerations for the educating of students between the ages of 18 and 21:

- 1) Students exit high school via:
 - a. Graduation on credits
 - b. Completion of IEP goals and objectives
 - c. Aging out at 21
- 2) 18 to 21 programs are not a continuation of high school but a time period for completion of transitional and other goals
 - a. New goals are not written during this period...students work on uncompleted existing goals
 - b. Students do not participate in traditional high school classes that are not related to existing goals
 - c. IDEA requires that goals be written with an annual focus so it is inappropriate to write goals in a student's "senior" year that are more far reaching and comprehensive than those of previous years.
- 3) 18 to 21 programming does not have specific requirements for time or location
 - a. Because of their transitional focus, 18 – 21 programming tends to be community based with a high degree of focus on employment and independent living
 - b. Schools are not required to have students enrolled full time. Programming can be for part days, less than five days a week or in a non-school setting
- 4) 18-21 programs focus on skills and behaviors to be learned based upon IEP goals
 - a. Programs are educational, not career placement. Schools teach students marketable employment skills but are not required to find students meaningful employment
 - b. Schools are not required to place students in public or private programs to meet student needs if the school can adequately address those needs
- 5) With all students on IEP, IDEA requires that services be delivered in the least restrictive setting possible
 - a. Transition services need to be provided early and consistently in a student's educational career
 - b. It is the goal of education to graduate all students with their peers and prepared for post secondary options
 - c. 18 to 21 programs automatically move students to level IV programming