

Postsecondary Goal Development: Designing Visions of the Future

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2004

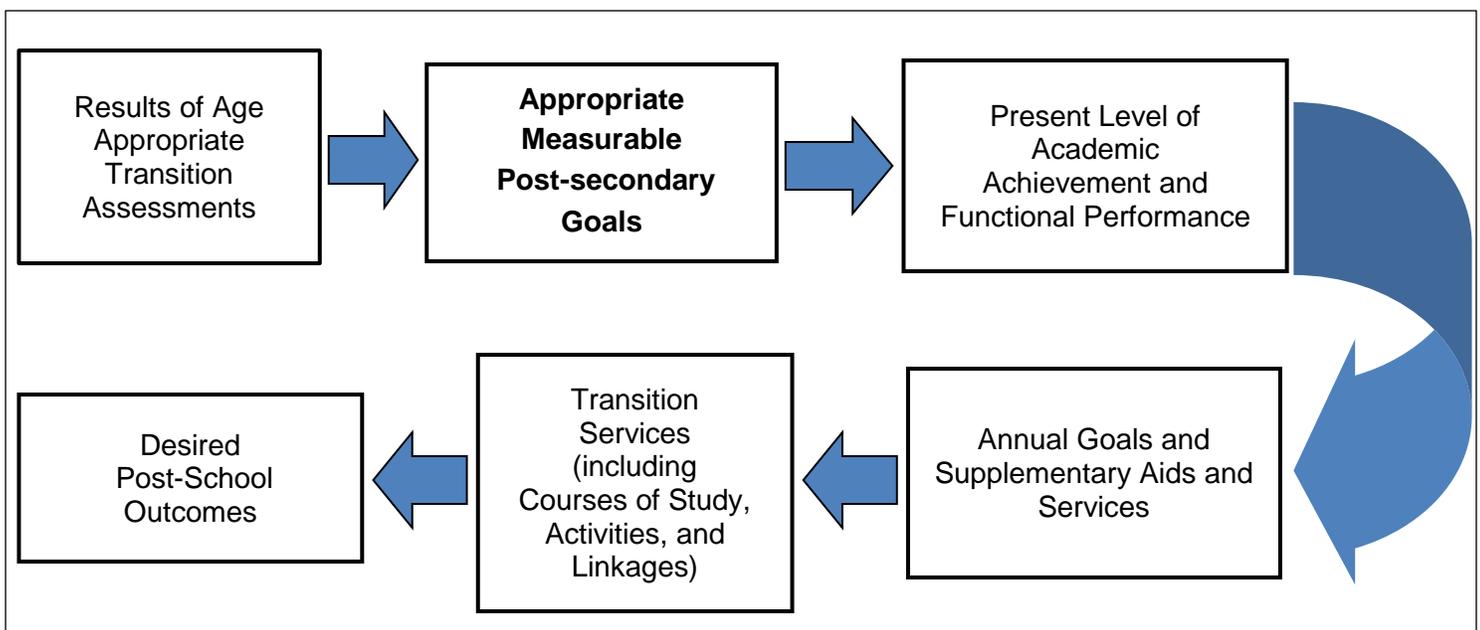
The Requirement to Write Postsecondary Goals and Provide Transition Services

- (b) Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and updated annually, thereafter, the IEP must include—
- (1) Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon **age-appropriate transition assessments** related to **training, education, employment, and independent living** skills, where appropriate
 - (2) **Transition services** (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals
IDEA 2004 §300.320(b) (1)(2)

Definition of Transition Services

- (a) Transition services means a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that—
- (1) Is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;
 - (2) Is based on the individual child's **needs**, taking into account the child's **strengths, preferences, and interests**; and includes—
 - (i) Instruction;
 - (ii) Related services;
 - (iii) Community experiences;
 - (iv) The development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives; and
 - (v) If appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation
- IDEA 2004 §300.43(a)(2)

Transition Planning Process



Handout

Notes are excerpts from the T/TAC College of William and Mary's *Transition Planning for a Brighter Future Considerations Packet*. To request an electronic copy of this document, go to <http://education.wm.edu/centers/ttac/resources/considerations/index.php>.

Postsecondary goals articulate students' visions for *adult* life; students do not accomplish postsecondary goals while they are still in high school.

"Appropriate" "means 'suitable' or 'fitting' for a particular person, condition, occasion, or place" (*Federal Register*, 2006, p. 46661,). Appropriate postsecondary goals capitalize on students' interests, preferences, and strengths.

Measurable postsecondary goals articulate these visions using terminology that captures the spirit of IDEA's requirement to design a results-oriented process. Using performance terminology enhances the measurability of postsecondary goal achievement. The use of objective and quantifiable performance terminology describes results that students plan to achieve after high school.

Postsecondary goals must be based upon the results of **age-appropriate transition assessments**. "Age appropriate" measures reflect students' chronological rather than developmental ages (Wehmeyer, Sands, Knowlton, & Kozleski 2002).

Transition assessments are measures that facilitate a "planned, continuous process of gathering and organizing information on the student's strengths, needs, preferences and interests in relation to the demands of current and future living, learning, and working environments" (Sitlington, Neubert, Begun, Lombard, & Leconte, 2007, p. 3).

IDEA specifies four categories around which data are collected – **training, education, employment, and independent living**. Information generated around these four areas allows IEP teams to design postsecondary goals and corresponding transition services for a given student in all arenas of adult life.

IEP teams are responsible for translating transition assessment data into appropriate, measurable postsecondary goals. Postsecondary goals are developed by comparing students' strengths to the requirements of their desired post-school environments. Students with sufficient strengths in areas of interest and preference are ready to write postsecondary goals that reflect their visions for adulthood. However, when students lack sufficient strengths in areas of interest, reflection is in order. In what related areas of interest might students have sufficient strengths? For example, a student may express interest in veterinary medicine but not possess sufficient strengths to meet the employment demands of veterinary medicine. A related career in which a student might find success would be to work as a veterinary assistant or animal caretaker. Or, do students demonstrate strengths that could be aligned with adult life options they have never considered? For example, a student may demonstrate strengths necessary to coach a children's soccer team, but never have thought about doing so. The answers to these questions will inform the need for additional assessment of interests and preferences that align with strengths students have demonstrated.

Only after a match has been found between students' interests, preferences, and strengths may the process of designing appropriate, measurable postsecondary goals begin. This continuous process of collecting and using assessment data to shape students' visions for adult life will result in the eventual development of postsecondary goals that reflect realistic, satisfying plans for the future (Sitlington et al., 2007).

For more information

Contact a transition specialist at the Training and Technical Assistance Center that serves your Superintendents Region or visit <http://ttaonline.org/>

References

Clark, G. M. (2007). *Assessment for transition planning* (2nd ed.). Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

Federal Register/Vol. 71, No. 156/Monday, August 14, 2006/Rules and Regulations.

Sitlington, P. L., Neubert, D. A., Begun, W. H., Lombard, R. C., & Leconte, P. J. (2007). *Assess for success* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Wehmeyer, M. L., Sands, D. J., Knowlton, H. E., & Kozleski, E. B. (2002). *Teaching students with mental retardation: Providing access to the general curriculum*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

Power Point References

All pictures on slides come from Microsoft Power Point Clip Art

Slide 3 (*Federal Register*)

Slides 4 (Clark, 2007)

Slides 5, 6, 9 (Sitlington et al, 2007)