
Guide to Transitional Services Garden City School District

What are Transitional Services?

Transition services are intended to prepare students to move from the world of school to the world of adulthood. This includes formulating a plan for post-secondary education, the world of work, and adult living in the community. This process includes instruction, community learning experiences, and support services, with the intent to develop skills, knowledge, and abilities for post-secondary success. Areas addressed include post-school living, learning, and working needs. It may also include assistance in making applications prior to leaving school for services from community agencies, colleges, or for employment. Transition services are based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests.

In New York State, transition components are built into the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) for special education. All youth with disabilities, aged 15-21, must have transition components in their IEPs with initial vocational assessments (Transition Assessments) beginning at age 12. Transition should be discussed well before students reach their junior or senior year of high school. For students with more severe disabilities, this may need to be considered earlier than age 12. Transition services must be a coordinated set of activities oriented toward producing results.

When should I begin to think about family/ student supports and/or transitional services?

Although we are speaking about transition to adult living and the world of work, some of the family and student support services outlined in the following pages are available to students with severe disabilities at an early age. For the majority of our special education students, the transition process begins at age 15. Like most students, your child may need a lot of support to make the difficult transition from school to adult life. There are many services available to young adults with disabilities to provide them with the support they need to succeed in all areas of their lives. As a parent, your job (along with the other professionals who are working with your child), is to find out about these services, determine which ones suit your child's needs and dreams, and then follow the procedures to secure eligibility for them. Regardless of ability, our students need support and guidance towards finding a meaningful and fulfilling life



Special points of interest:

- ☺ What are transitional services?
- ☺ When should I begin to think about transitional services for my child?
- ☺ What types of questions should I be considering related to transitional services?
- ☺ What are some types of transitional services that may be available to my child?

What types of questions should I be considering related to transitional services?

As your child progresses through their education, these are some of the questions to consider with your school support team:

What are the goals for this student?

What kind of work situation is realistically attainable for this student?

What kind of living arrangements are possible for this student in adult life?

What kind of skills will be essential for this student to be successful in a competitive or supported work setting?

What kind of skills will be necessary for independent living in the community?

What kind of transportation skills will this student need to get to work?

What kind of problem solving skills will this student need to meet the demands of integration into the community?

How will the family be involved in this planning process?

What agency resources may be necessary?

Another important step is to talk with your child and find out what his/her/their dreams are for the future in many facets of life. Some examples:

Where do you want to live?

- in your own apartment
- in a group living situation
- with family members

What interests you during your free time?

- physical fitness
- enjoying activities with others
- individual activities (i.e. reading or playing video games)

What do you want to do?

- what kind of work interests you
- what are you good at
- more school and training

How do you want to travel?

- use public transportation
- get rides from family, friends, co-workers
- drive your own vehicle

What are some types of transitional services that may be available to my child?

Community agencies and supports

It is essential to familiarize yourself with community agencies and financial supports that are available to your child, if deemed eligible based on specific criteria. Some examples of community agencies include The Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), The Office of Mental Health (OMH), and Adult Career and Continuing Education Services- Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR formerly VESID). Each agency has their own criteria, eligibility requirements, and procedures for review and service provisions.



Office Of People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)

OPWDD: provides a wide range of services for both children and adults, such as: Family Support Services, service coordination, respite support, family and individual counseling advocacy services, residential support (ISS), supported employment, community support services (in-home support, respite), environmental modifications (adaptive equipment), healthcare (Medicaid), recreational opportunities, information and referral, and much more. This agency assists in identifying appropriate housing, including independent living, assisted facilities, home sharing and a variety of other residential arrangements.

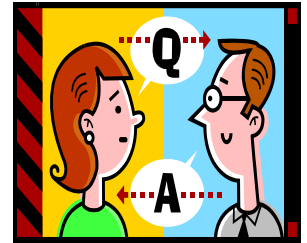
*Health Home Case Management services are provided by Care Coordination Organizations (CCOs) to assist people with developmental disabilities and their families in gaining access to services and supports appropriate to their needs. Health Home Care Management services are designed to:

- provide comprehensive, person-centered care planning using a network of care managers and providers (team approach)
- provide enhanced coordination and integration of primary and behavioral health services as well as access to medical and dental services
- identify community based resources and make connections to community services and supports, housing, social services, and family services
- use technology to link all services.

*Care Management services are provided by qualified Care Managers who use a person-centered planning process in developing, implementing, and maintaining a person's Life Plan. An alternative form of case management, which is also provided by CCO care managers is Basic Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Plan Support. Basic HCBS Plan Support services is a very minimal coordination option and does not include coordination of health care or mental health services.

Criteria includes a documented developmental disability prior to the age of 22, including but not limited to intellectual disabilities, autism, epilepsy, neurological impairments, or closely related conditions that limit intellectual functioning. Documentation includes medical records, psychological assessments, and adaptive behavior scales. Application to OPWDD for determination of eligibility can occur at any time depending on the level and severity of disability. Please see their website (see below) for specific information and procedures. You can also contact your building's social worker (see last page) for assistance with the application and transmittal form. Once an individual is found eligible for OPWDD, he/she will then need to go through the Front Door for an orientation, intake, and service plan approval.

Website: www.opwdd.ny.gov



Supplemental Security Income (SSI)/ SSDI/ Medicaid

Supplemental Security Income: children younger than age 18 who have disabilities might be eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments. Most individuals should apply for SSI and Medicaid at the age of 18. On applications completed before an individual is age 18, parental income is accounted for to determine eligibility. SSI makes monthly payments to people with low income and limited resources who are 65 or older, or blind or disabled. Children younger than age 18 may qualify if they meet Social Security's definition of disability for children, and if their income and resources fall within the eligibility limits. Most students will not qualify before age 18. Adults who become disabled in childhood might be entitled to Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits. SSDI benefits are called a "child's" benefit because it is paid on a parent's Social Security earnings record.

Eligibility criteria to be considered disabled by SSI currently includes:

- the child must not be working or earning more than \$1,260 a month; If your child is younger than 22, and is a student who regularly attends school, SSI may exclude \$1,900 of monthly earnings, with an annual limit of \$7,670, when calculating their income for SSI. (effective 2020)
- SSI limits for resources that they count- \$2,000
- the child must have a physical or mental condition, or a combination of conditions, that results in "marked and severe functional limitations." This means that the condition(s) must very seriously limit your child's activities.
- the child's condition(s) must have lasted, or be expected to last, at least 12 months.

Website: www.ssa.gov

Office of Mental Health (OMH)

OMH: This agency provides a range of service for both children and adults with serious emotional disturbances and their families. They provide services to youngsters and their families who need supports and services including mental health, clinic treatment, day treatment, family support services, functional family therapy, home and community-based services waivers, single point of access (SPOA), vocational services, health care, recreation, case management, social services, residential resources and transitional services from high school into continuing education or the work force.



Criteria includes a documented mental health diagnosis, including but not limited to immediate needs because of psychosis, depression, anxiety, trauma, ADHD/impulse control, anti-social behavior, and oppositional behavior. There must be persistent home and school problems, including but not limited to behavior problems and risky behaviors.

Application to OMH for the determination of eligibility can occur at any time depending on the level and severity of the emotional disability. Please see their website (see below) for specific information and procedures. You may also contact your building's social worker (see last page) for assistance with the application.

Website: www.omh.state.ny.us

Adult Career and Continuing Education Services- Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR)



ACCES-VR formerly VESID: This agency provides vocational rehabilitation services to eligible individuals to prepare them for employment. ACCES-VR skill training includes on the job programs, job coaching services, trade schools, college and university programs, vocational assessments, counseling and career planning, guidance counseling, and job placement services to find suitable work. Additional services include: supportive employment, tuition reimbursement (depending on need), and acting as liaison between students and college representatives. ACCES-VR services those with very varied levels of disabilities.

Criteria includes a documented disability that impacts their ability to seek, secure, and maintain employment, including but not limited to physical, learning, or mental impairments, impairments that impede employment, and the need for the services to help overcome employment barriers. Application to ACCES-VR for determination of eligibility can occur during a student's final year at the high school or thereafter. Families will receive a letter regarding the referral process. Please see their website (see below) for specific information and procedures. You may also contact the district Pupil Personnel Services office for further assistance.

Website: www.acces.nysed.gov

Other Things to Consider as Your Child Turns 18:

- Does my child need a Driver's License or Non-drivers identification card?
- Does my child need working papers?
- Do I need to plan for guardianship with a private attorney and family members before my child turns 18 and becomes legal age of consent?
- Do I need to set up a special needs trust with an attorney?
- Do I need to apply for Medicaid and SSI?
- Do I need to explore obtaining a health insurance rider for my child past the age of 18 or once they are no longer attending school (if they are not on my insurance plan)?
- Does my child need to register for the draft (males 18 and over)?
- Will my child need residential or supportive housing services?



Building Resources:

Primary Schools:

Tracy Catalanotti-Martinez, LCSW—School Social Worker

478-1600 or 478-1700 or 478-1800

Elementary Schools:

Michele Vincent, LCSW-R—School Social Worker

478-1400 or 478-1500

Middle School:

Keegan Baker, LMSW—School Social Worker

478-3061

High School:

Dina Bombardiere, LCSW-R—School Social Worker

478-2617

Brittany Mauceri, MS/NCSP- School Psychologist

478-2035

Jessica Berenbroick, EdM- School Psychologist

478-2618

Mandi Stefankiewicz- Assistant Principal for Guidance and PPS

478-2029

Pupil Personnel Services office:

478-1050

