

What is the Transition Planning Form (TPF)?

The Transition Planning Form (TPF) is a state-required form to be used every year at IEP meetings, starting when the student is 14 years old (or earlier if appropriate). The IEP Team uses the TPF to brainstorm and write down the student's plan for transition to adult life. It is different and separate from the IEP, but it is kept in the student's file with the IEP. The TPF is not a legal contract, and there is no legal requirement that anyone must carry out the action plan on the TPF. If the IEP Team decides that skills and services identified in the plan they wrote on the TPF must happen, those should be written in the IEP. The IEP – unlike the TPF – is a legal contract which says what the school must do.

Why is the Transition Planning Form Important?

The TPF focuses the IEP team, at the beginning of the IEP meeting, on the student's vision for their own future. Then the TPF guides the IEP team to talk about the student's needs, and to discuss how the student can build skills to achieve their adult vision. The TPF allows all of the important people in the student's life to document what they will do to support the student that year. The TPF allows the Team to think big and make a dynamic, creative plan. For example, what will the parent do? What will the counselor, technical teacher, or adult agency representative do? What will the employer or coach do? What will the student do? It all depends on the vision and needs of the student. Each student's plan will look different, because each student is unique.

When should the TPF be completed?

The IEP Team should discuss and complete the TPF at the start of the annual IEP meeting from age 14 onward (or earlier if appropriate). IEP Teams then discuss the IEP after the TPF is finished. Schools and parents can prepare students in advance by talking with them about the TPF and about their strengths, needs, and vision for adult life.

Resources

The LINK Center, a transition project of the Federation for Children with Special Needs
www.fcsn.org/linkcenter

MA ESE Special Education Secondary Transition Website
www.doe.mass.edu/sped/secondary-transition

Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2013-1: Postsecondary Goals and Annual IEP Goals in the Transition Planning Process
http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/13_1ta.html

Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2017-1: Characteristics of High Quality Secondary Transition Services
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/2017-1ta.pdf>



Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148
781-338-3000 | www.doe.mass.edu



FEDERATION FOR CHILDREN
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Federation for Children with Special Needs

The Schrafft Center
529 Main Street, Suite 1M3
Boston, MA 02129
800-331-0688 | www.fcsn.org

TIPS: Transition Information for Parents and Students with IEPs

(Ages 14-22)



The Transition Planning Form (TPF)

A series of brochures produced by The LINK Center - a project of the Federation for Children with Special Needs, and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE)

The Transition Planning Form: What you need to know....

TIP 1: Help students to talk about the TPF by preparing them in advance.

- Throughout the school year, school professionals (e.g., guidance counselors, teachers) and parents can help students think about what they need, what they are good at, what they like, and what they want to do related to work, education, living, and participation in the community.
- Before the annual IEP meeting, the school and family can discuss the TPF with the student, so that the student will be ready to talk about their vision, their needs, and an action plan to help them build the skills they need for adult life.

TIP 2: The TPF should reflect the student's postsecondary vision.

- The student can be encouraged and supported to lead the TPF discussion, as much as possible.
- The postsecondary vision recorded on the TPF should be the student's vision for adult life, not anyone else's.
- After the student's vision is written on the TPF, it should be cut-and-pasted into the vision section of the IEP. Then, if other members of the IEP Team would like to add their thoughts about the student's vision for adult life and for the next 1 – 5 years, those thoughts are written in the IEP.
- If the student cannot attend the IEP meeting, the vision statement should reflect Team members' best judgment of what the student wants in adult life.

TIP 3: As much as possible, think big to write a dynamic, creative action plan.

- After the vision statement is written, the student and other Team members list the student's disability-related needs that are challenges to achieving the student's vision for adult life.
- Together, the Team creates an action plan that will

help the student to build skills that will minimize those challenges, and move the student, year by year, closer toward achieving the student's adult vision.

- Because the TPF is not a contract, everyone around the IEP table can play a role in the action plan. So the action plan can say what the parent plans to do, the student, the guidance counselor, the coach, the employer – anyone!
- As appropriate to the needs of each student, the team should consider action steps that will build both academic skills (e.g., reading comprehension) and functional skills (e.g., self-regulation).
- There is no legal requirement that anyone must carry out the action plan on the TPF.

The TPF is not part of the IEP, but it should be kept in the student's file and updated every year.

TIP 4: After the TPF discussion, use the TPF to help write the IEP.

- The Team asks, "Given the student's vision for adult life and their disability-related needs, what measurable IEP goals should we write that will build the student's skills to move them one year closer toward achieving their adult vision?"
- The Team looks at the TPF vision, disability-related needs, and action plan to decide what skill-building transition services and supports the student needs this year. For example, does the student need work experiences in school and in the community? Support from adult agencies?
 - If the IEP Team decides that parts of the action plan are the school's responsibility, those parts should be written in the IEP.

The student's vision for their future drives the transition planning process.



Student's Vision

Shri wants to be an accountant. He plans to go to college and live on campus. After graduation he will live in an apartment.

Disability-Related Needs

- Writing skills
- College readiness skills
- Organizational skills
- Self-advocacy skills

The Team can write an action plan for Shri that might include:

- Shri and his parents will tour colleges and visit the disability services offices.
- Shri's counselor will help him dual enroll in a college math course.
- Shri and his cousin will explore app-based organizers.
- A speech therapist will help Shri work in groups.
- Teachers will help improve his writing skills, practice interviewing, and learn his rights.

Student's Vision

Liza wants to work in a pet store and learn to be a groomer. She wants to get certification from a college or training from a business. Liza wants to live at home for a while and then move to an apartment with a friend.

Disability-Related Needs

- Career skills
- Personal care skills
- Self-advocacy skills
- Travel training
- Community safety skills

The Team can write an action plan for Liza that might include:

- School will refer Liza to the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) for employment skills training.
- Liza and her family can explore college programs and on-the-job training.
- Liza's uncle will help her volunteer at a local animal shelter.
- The teacher will help Liza get travel training from the MBTA.
- Liza's teacher and family will help her learn how to grocery shop and clean.