



TO

INDEPENDENCE

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PASSPORT TO INDEPENDENCE

Transition from School to Work TIMELINE

The Kansas transition philosophy supports “employment for all students” regardless of disability and approaches the activities with detail about supports for the students, their family, community, education, and community based organizations.

Transition provides a way to assist students in successfully moving from school to adult life, while gaining self-determination skills, building self esteem, and becoming as independent as they can be. The Transition Timeline provides basic information on activities to assist a student in obtaining a career that will support them in life. This timeline is targeted to parents/guardians but can also be used by students and educators.

The more that parents/ guardians are involved in the process of transition for students, the better the outcomes for those students. When adults have expectations of participation in the process for themselves and the students, there is a sense of empowerment that is invaluable to a student’s self-esteem and personal growth.

Social Security: There is some debate about whether applying for Social Security should be included in this information.

- Information on SSI: The average monthly payment is less than \$500. Federal poverty level is \$867. Trying to live on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) means living below the poverty level.
- Statistics show that once people start receiving Social Security disability benefits, very few ever get off of Social Security.
- Some advocate that using Social Security to help pay for things while in post secondary school is very helpful. This makes Social Security a transitional service, not a permanent form of income. It should be seen as a stepping stone for life.
- Some parents don’t want their children to stop receiving it because it seems a secure means of income. Parents should remember that the student/adult would be living below the poverty level if on Social Security. He/she may not want to live with you for the rest of their or your lives. Work means more opportunity to be as independent as possible and living with a higher standard of living.

Things to Remember:

- Work is the pathway to get the things you want and need.
- We need to culturally change our expectations of kids. Kids have chores at home, even at early ages. Poverty is not an option; go to work. After high school you go on to school or you get a job.
- Health insurance (Medicaid) is still available through Working Healthy for many with disabilities.
- Those who might face a Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiting list once out of school may be eligible to receive some personal services through the WORK program with Working Healthy *if* they are working.
- Parents: At school, you have the power to say “This is not an appropriate Transition plan”.

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“Informed choice is very important. *What are **all** the choices?*

It’s not a decision between red and green Jell-O. Maybe you don’t want Jell-O. Maybe you want something else on the buffet. Maybe you don’t want buffet.”

- Mike Donnelly, Executive Director of Kansas Rehabilitation Services

Acronyms: Many acronyms are used in this publication. Here are the most common

IEP – Individualized Education Plan - is mandated by the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#) (IDEA). The IDEA requires public schools to develop an IEP for every student with a disability who is found to meet the federal and state requirements for [special education](#). In this document, the IEP refers to the written document that describes that educational program.

CDDO – Community Developmental Disability Organization – often provide services to students with mental retardation and severe physical disabilities

CIL – Center for Independent Living – services are provided to anyone with a disability and provide assistance with living on your own in the community. They include learning how to budget, manage schedules, use public transportation; manage payment to personal assistants, advocacy with landlords and Social Security, etc.

KRS – Kansas Rehabilitation Services is a state run federally funded program to provide vocational training and job placement.

MHC - Mental Health Center – services are provided to people with mental and emotional illnesses and include counseling and some employment services.

Student Support Services – college office that arranges for accommodations in the classroom for college students with disabilities.

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4th to 6th graders Steps to engage and prepare youth to actively participate in transition include: participate in home chores; learn time management skills; problem solve; assume self-care; become involved in school and community groups and activities, such as volunteering alongside their peers and be encouraged to answer questions when developmentally ready.

12 -14 Years Old

Action Steps	Detail	Notes
Use available tools to help student determine where his/her interests are. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the assessments on the Kansas Career Pipeline web site: Interest Assessment, Skills Assessment, and Work Values Assessment. • Student and parent/guardian have discussion regarding career interests. • Student and parent/guardian initiate discussion with counselor/special education teacher regarding career interests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kansas Career Pipeline Web site: careerpipeline.org (may be available at the school district as well) • Explore volunteer opportunities in areas of interest (i.e. Volunteer Center, hospital, nursing home, library, local employers, or check with a teacher) • After school and/or church programs and activities are additional places students can participate and learn valuable team and leadership skills. 	
Encourage student to participate in a student mentoring program through the community or school. Mentoring programs are proven to increase student self-esteem and graduation rates for those who participate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring programs available in your community can be found at KansasMentors.com. (www.KansasMentors.com) Emphasize mentoring for work and career exploration. 	
Assist student in understanding his/her disability, how it impacts everyday living, how to advocate for him/her self. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with student his/her diagnosis for education and self-advocacy purposes. • Discuss medication and its effects (if applicable) for education and self-advocacy purposes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student prepares questions for his/her doctor at medical and/or therapy appointments. • Discussion every time medications are changed. • May want to include this in IEP. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather resources to assist student in learning about disability history and disability rights. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy (www.kyea.org) 	

14 - 21 Years Old

Action Steps	Detail	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Transition Services (if student qualifies for an IEP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition services will be discussed (and are required by Kansas Law) at IEP meetings starting at age 14 (if not, ask about it). Parents should be able to get answers on what the student is capable of doing. • Get the list of what transition services are provided through the school. 	

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Transition from School to Work TIMELINE

14 – 16 Years Old

Action Steps	Detail	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By the time a student reaches the age of 14 the IEP must have a statement of the course of study which references the post secondary goal. • Obtain a copy of IEP, last evaluation, summary of performance (SOP) • Find out about your school district's transition programs (high school and 18-21 years old.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEP references post-secondary goals. Some students are better able to work on this at a later age (16). • Plan should be reasonable for the student's abilities and also take into account accommodations that may make the goal possible. • An example of a course of study: John wants to be a weatherman; he needs to start taking science and math courses to prepare for going to college. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue discussing with student about disability history, disability pride and Independent Living philosophy. • Identify independent living skills needed to manage disability/health issues at home and in the workplace. • Health Care Skills Checklist (http://depts.washington.edu/healthtr/Checklists/health_care.htm) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact staff from Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy (KYEa) for more information on disability history and disability pride. www.kyea.org <p>Regarding independent living skills and work skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with staff from Center for Independent Living (www.kcdcinfo.com/DocumentView.asp?DID=138), Community Mental Health Center (http://www.kcdcinfo.com/index.asp?nid=188), or a Community Developmental Disability Organization (www.kcdcinfo.com/index.asp?NID=111) 	
<p>Discuss with student he or she is expected to go to work and you are working to help him or her be prepared for working.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go to the local workforce center and see if you are eligible for the WIA youth employment services. These are available for students as young as 14 years of age. www.kcdcinfo.com/index.asp?nid=124 	
<p>Contact service providers that provide adult services to see what is available and whether or not there is a waiting list.</p>	<p>Contact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Center for Independent Living (www.kcdcinfo.com/DocumentView.asp?DID=138) • Community Mental Health Center (http://www.kcdcinfo.com/index.asp?nid=188) One year before eligibility for adult services. • Community Developmental Disability Organization (www.kcdcinfo.com/index.asp?NID=111) 	

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16 years old – Employment

Action Steps	Detail	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 16, the IEP must have a statement of needed transition services and any interagency linkages that are appropriate to meet the post secondary goal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition services and agency contacts listed on IEP <p>Examples of transition services could include various tasks from learning to do laundry, to budgeting, to career exploration. This document has additional examples throughout the pages.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take the assessments on the Kansas Career Pipeline web site again due to changes in interests and maturity. Kansas Career Pipeline Web site: http://kansascareerpipeline.org Discuss assessments with school counselors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin working in areas of interest. Look at high demand jobs in the career clusters that the student has an interest in. Seek out job shadow opportunities in those areas. Use Disability Mentoring Day: www.kcdcinfo.com/dmd Use other mentoring/job shadowing opportunities provided by school or local agencies. 	

16 years old – Accommodations

Action Steps	Detail	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is an accommodation? Reasonable accommodation is any change or adjustment to a job or work environment that permits a qualified applicant or employee with a disability to participate in the job application process, to perform the essential functions of a job, or to enjoy benefits and privileges of employment equal to those enjoyed by employees without disabilities. An employer is required to provide a reasonable accommodation to a qualified applicant or employee with a disability unless the employer can show that the accommodation would be an undue hardship -- that is, that it would require significant difficulty or expense. 	<p>Use the IEP to figure out what accommodations may be needed. This needs to be examined through the IEP and put into the IEP as a recommendation.</p> <p>For example, reasonable accommodation may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> providing or modifying equipment or devices, job restructuring, part-time or modified work schedules, reassignment to a vacant position, adjusting or modifying examinations, training materials, or policies, providing readers and interpreters, and making the workplace readily accessible to and usable by people with disabilities. <p>Web site: www.eeoc.gov/facts/ada18.html</p>	

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<p>16 years old – Accommodations (continued)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student and parent/guardian discuss what an accommodation is. • Student and parent/guardian discuss accommodations needed and currently using at school, work and home. Understand who provides each accommodation. • Student and parent/guardian discuss how those accommodations will be provided after high school in work and/or post-secondary education situations. • Before graduation from high school, the school is responsible for determining and providing accommodations. After graduation, the secondary training is responsible for providing the accommodation, but it must be requested. Employment accommodations are provided on request and may or may not be exactly what is requested if another accommodation will suffice. 	<p>Based on what accommodations work at school, capture in writing accommodations the student will need to learn, work and live.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with parent/ guardian. • Discuss with counselor/teacher. • Student helps with request of any new/additional accommodations going forward. • Have the school put in writing the accommodations that will be needed for work and post secondary situations. • Secure documentation from previous teachers, schools to be able to show or articulate the accommodation need when making a post-secondary or work accommodation request. 	
<p>How to ask for an accommodation... Do's and Don'ts</p>	<p>Prepare the request with the help of advocacy organization, trusted teacher or parent.</p> <p>Do's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know in advance what you are going to ask for. • Script the request carefully, and practice the request until you have it word perfect. • Be willing to compromise as long as your needs are still met. • Make the request in a positive and assertive manner. <p>Don'ts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologize for your disability or asking for the accommodation. • Demand the most expensive accommodation when a less costly one will meet the need. • Make the accommodation sound more complicated than it is. 	

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Transition from School to Work TIMELINE

16 years old - Independent living and Leadership

Action Steps	Detail	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss what services will be needed after high school to live independently. Services might include: case management, personal care attendants, transitional living services, etc. • Look at students' preferences, needs, options available (including residential, employment, and post-secondary education options). 	<p>Parents need to think about and discuss with the student how they may live independently as an adult. Organizations that may be able to help with this process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Developmental Disability Organization (CDDO): www.kcdcinfo.com/DocumentView.asp?DID=135 • Mental Health Center (MHC): www.kcdcinfo.com/DocumentView.asp?DID=136 • Center for Independent Living (CIL): www.kcdcinfo.com/DocumentView.asp?DID=138 	
<p>If student is considering further education after high school, begin looking at post-secondary education options and the programs they have in the areas of the student's interest.</p>	<p>Visit different post-secondary schools, including the Student Support Office. Find out what service the school provides students with disabilities. www.kcdcinfo.com/index.asp?nid=206</p> <p>Find out what support groups are available in the community the student is considering attending. (i.e. peer support, community support, church, etc.)</p>	
<p>Student works on leadership skills. Why is student leadership important?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student leadership provides opportunities for students to get involved and to learn skills that can be transferable to the workplace and community. It also deepens each student's commitment to adult literacy and increases the chances that the student will continue to learn. 	<p>Student can apply to attend the Kansas Youth Leadership Forum. www.kyea.org (see programs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This program develops self esteem, advocacy skills, communication skills, leadership and provides a broader understanding of the student's role in their school and community. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to look at Assistive Technology for help with school, independent living, and post-secondary education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there any new technology available that might make some aspect of education or independent living possible or easier that wasn't available 1-2 years ago? 	

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18 months prior to exiting school – General Transition

Action Steps	Detail	Notes
<p>When a student is in school, services are provided as an entitlement. After a student leaves high school, a student may participate in programs if s/he is eligible and funds are available. Some services are no longer provided or are provided through a different organization that has different qualification guidelines. It is important to understand how services may change as a student turns 18.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If he/she is a client of a Community Based organization (i.e. MHC, CDDO or CIL) the student needs to meet with that organization to see if eligibility changes when he/she turns 18 and what (if anything) needs to be done. • If a client of Kansas Rehabilitation Services, meet with Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask for a review of services, when they will start, how they will continue, or how they may change when student turns 18 years of age. <p>Advocacy organizations that can help with getting services after high school if you're having trouble (i.e. Keys for Networking (mental health), Disability Rights Center, Kansas Legal Aid, etc., community based organizations mentioned in previous box.)</p>	
<p>For students on an IEP, discuss anticipated exit date from high school.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some students are ready to leave high school and begin work or further education. Some students may benefit by extending his/her time for job preparation or independent living. It should be a staffing team decision that student and parents participate in. • Parents and youth should discuss with school personnel and community based organization advocates when is a good time to graduate – to make sure student is ready before graduating. 	
<p>Complete transition planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss projected budget for post-high school (income and expenses) • Ensure applications for services are submitted to chosen agencies before graduation so your student will not have to wait for services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and put on calendar key dates for completion for activities for transition from school to employment and independent living. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reassess that the classes being taken meet the requirements needed for graduation and post-secondary education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange school and extra-curricular schedule for student to succeed (i.e. best time for classes, build in supports, etc.) 	

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Transition from School to Work TIMELINE

18 months prior to exiting school – Pursuing Education

Action Steps	Detail	Notes
<p>Kansas Rehabilitation Services: Counselors work in partnership with people with disabilities to help them assess their skills and interests, to develop individualized plans for employment or education to become employed and to purchase or arrange for the services they need to become employed. Services are individualized according to each person's disability, strengths, interests, skills, goals and informed choice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore with student the purpose of KRS and what services may be available if he/she is eligible. • Notify Kansas Vocational Rehabilitation Services (KRS) of need to use their services. Will need to have these documents available: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Security card • Birth Certificate • Kansas ID and/or Driver's License • Complete Kansas Rehabilitation Service Application. If eligible, prepare an individual plan for employment with the KRS counselor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kansas Rehabilitation Services Contact Information: www.kcdcinfo.com/DocumentView.asp?DID=149 • Social Security Web site: www.ssa.gov • Vital Statistics Web site: www.kdheks.gov/vital/birth.html • Division of Motor Vehicles Web site: www.ksrevenue.org/dmvproof.htm • Kansas Rehabilitation Services Application: www.srskansas.org/rehab/text/PolicyManual/Section_8/Part-3_Application.pdf 	
<p>Determine what post-secondary education the student will need after reviewing career assessments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sure to contact the Student Support Services office of the school to see what supports are available to the student and what timelines for information they have. • To get an accommodation at a post-secondary school requires paperwork and time, so it must be discussed and processed early. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tour college campuses, vocational-technical schools (if applicable.) and meet with Director of Student Support services (each school has different titles for this position). To get an accommodation at a post-secondary school requires paperwork and time, so it must be discussed and processed early. • Technical training: www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=1965 • Community Colleges: www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=1967 • 4 year colleges: www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=1966 • Meet with students (and parents) who attend these schools to find out pros and cons of the schools. Check with advocacy groups for contacts. 	

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Transition from School to Work TIMELINE

<p><i>18 months prior to exiting school – Pursuing Education (continued)</i></p> <p>Look at financial aid, grants, and other funding sources for post-secondary education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kansas Rehabilitation Services: www.kcdcinfo.com/DocumentView.asp?DID=149 • Review the Free Application For Student Aid (FAFSA). Must be filled out for most school financial aid. Check with the school for deadlines. www.fafsa.ed.gov • Google “scholarships” or “financial aid” on the internet for additional funding sources. <p>Some advocacy organizations will help with this (i.e. case workers, Keys for Networking, etc.)</p>	
<p>What is an accommodation in regard to training or post-secondary education?</p>	<p>Use what is developed in the IEP and have written documentation. (Note: Should be able to use documentation or GED testing.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modification or adjustment to the class environment or to the manner in which the class information is customarily provided. • Modification or adjustment to the testing process. • Modification or adjustment in physical or program access to allow equal access to education and/or training. 	

18 months prior to exiting school – Pursuing Employment

Action Steps	Detail	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go to Workforce Center in your area to find out what services are available to help with finding employment (i.e. resume writing, interviewing skills, BEST classes, Work Keys Certificates, training programs, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kansas Workforce Centers: www.kansasworks.com • Determine if the student can participate in or is eligible for any of the core or intensive services available at the Workforce Center. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know how/where to look for a job • Develop resume and cover letter (if applicable) • Know how to complete job applications • Develop interview skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kansas Workforce Center: www.kansasworks.com • Kansas Vocational Rehabilitation Service Counselors: www.kcdcinfo.com/DocumentView.asp?DID=149 • Job Placement Specialists • Centers for Independent Living (employment specialists): www.kcdcinfo.com/DocumentView.asp?DID=138 • CDDO (employment specialists): www.kcdcinfo.com/DocumentView.asp?DID=135 • Mental Health Center (employment specialists): www.kcdcinfo.com/DocumentView.asp?DID=136 	

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Transition from School to Work TIMELINE

1 Year prior to exiting school

Action Steps	Detail	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with Working Healthy Benefits Specialist to discuss transition process and options available in regard to Medicaid and Working Healthy eligibility requirements. (Possible eligibility at 16 years of age.) Continue to identify independent living skills needed to manage disability/health issues at home and in the workplace. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Healthy: www.kcdcinfo.com/DocumentView.asp?DID=155 Centers for Independent Living: www.kcdcinfo.com/DocumentView.asp?DID=138 CDDO: www.kcdcinfo.com/DocumentView.asp?DID=135 Mental Health Center: www.kcdcinfo.com/DocumentView.asp?DID=136 	

1 Year prior to 18

Action Steps	Detail	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools are required to notify students of the rights that transfer to them at 18 years of age. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents should start assessing decision making skills of student to determine abilities and assistance needed after they turn 18. Parents should work in concert with teachers and community providers to make the assessment about student's decision-making skills. Talk to independent living and advocacy organizations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents should use the IEP to substantiate their decisions. If student is not able to make decisions independently, review options available which include but are not limited to: guardianship, conservatorship, durable power of attorney (medical, financial). (http://www.ksgprog.org) 	

18 year old males

Action Steps	Detail	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 18 year old males must register for selective services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website: www.sss.gov/linkregist.html Meet with recruiters to discuss military careers. 	

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Transition from School to Work TIMELINE

Semester before exiting school

Action Steps	Detail	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If continuing education, fill out the Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be filled out for most school financial aid. Check with the school for deadlines. www.fafsa.ed.gov 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain a copy of last evaluation or Individual Education Plan. Obtain a copy of the Summary of Performance (SOP). Keep for potential need in higher education. Obtain copy of high school transcript. Obtain copy of teacher recommendations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request copies from Transition Coordinator or Counselor at school. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If student is heading for a post secondary school, invite the student support service coordinator from their college of choice to the last IEP before the exit IEP to make sure that everything in the SOP is correct and acceptable to them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the Summary of Performance information has what the higher education team needs. Make sure the diagnosis listed and needs statements are correct. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If student is heading for more schooling, student must talk to the Student Support Services office of school the student is enrolled in at least two months before school starts to ensure paperwork is completed and support services can be discussed and worked out. This is all student responsibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk to Student Support Services office at least 2 months prior to the beginning of the semester. Responsibility for supports and services changes in higher education from the school being responsible to the student being responsible. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get phone, email, etc. for friends and teachers to keep in touch with after student is out of school. 		