Transition to Adult Life: A Shared Responsibility

Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Policy to Practice Guidebook

Developed by:
Center on Community Living and Careers
Indiana Institute on Disability and Community
Indiana University
The University Affiliated Program of Indiana

Project Funded by:
Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Division of Disability, Aging, and Rehabilitative Services
Indiana Family and Social Services Administration

Tool Kit

Sharing the Responsibility: From Policy to Practice

Working Together: Partners in Transition

Creating Possibilities and Forging Solutions
This material was produced with support from the Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Division of Aging and Rehabilitative Services, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration.

The Center on Community Living and Careers is one of eight centers located at the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community, Indiana University, Bloomington. The work of the Indiana Institute encompasses the entire life span, from birth through older adulthood, and addresses topical areas that include:

- Young children and families
- School inclusion
- Transition
- Employment
- Community Living
- Aging
- Autism
- Information and referral
- Planning and policy studies
- Technology and technological adaptations
- Individual and family perspectives

The Indiana Institute on Disability and Community pursues its mission with support from Indiana University and funding from federal and state agencies, and foundations.

The mission of the Center on Community Living and Careers is to partner with people with disabilities, their families, and their communities to effect systems and organizational change through training, technical assistance, research, and by promoting advocacy.

The Center focuses on improving transition and adult services by supporting person-directed planning, career development, community living, home ownership, community membership, and organizational development.

For more information, please contact the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community at 2853 East Tenth Street, Bloomington, Indiana 47408-2696 or call (812) 855-6508. www.iidc.indiana.edu

All materials developed by the Indiana Institute are available in alternative formats upon request.
Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following individuals for their efforts in the development and design of this publication.

Barbara Bates
Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services

Kay Boas
Parent; Developmental Services Inc.

Jama Crowe
Richmond Community Schools

Steve Denton
Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Tish Frieders
J. Everett Light Career Center

Cris Fulford
ATTAIN

Karen Goehl
Indiana State University-Blumberg Center

Lisa Graham
Huntington North High School

Nancy Griffen
Indiana Resource Center for Independent Living

Teresa Grossi
Indiana Institute on Disability and Community

Jim Hackman
Vocational Rehabilitation Service

Randy Hall
Cardinal Services

Sally Hamburg
IN*SOURCE

Peggy Hege
Greater Lafayette Area Special Services

Cheryl Hofherr
Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Barbara Horvath
Monroe County Community Schools

Julie Hunt
North Central High School

Jodi Isaacs
Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Sheriene Knox
Hillcroft Services

Linda Lane
Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services

Marjorie Mansfield
Mental Health Association in Indiana, Inc.

Bruce McKay
Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Doug McKnight
Vocational Rehabilitation Services

J oan Melshimer
Dubois-Spencer-Perry Exceptional Children's Cooperative

Fred Nix
Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Dixie Patterson
Indiana Institute on Disability and Community

Michelle Persinger
Parent

J ackie Pitman
Department of Education, Division of Special Education

Gary Richter
Indiana Protection and Advocacy

Laura Ritterbush
Goodwill Services of Central Indiana, Inc.

Pat Rogan
Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis

Jim Sands
Greater Lafayette Area Special Services

Patrick Sandy
Crossroads Rehabilitation Center

Larry Schaaf
Indiana Institute on Disability and Community

Paula Keno Smith
Indianapolis Public Schools

Nancy Smith-Fague
Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Marcia Steigerwald
Indiana Institute on Disability and Community

Burke Thomas
Parent

Faith Thomas
Indiana Institute on Disability and Community

Jean Updike
Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Gloria Wall
IN*SOURCE

Becky Wilhite
Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Fred Williams
Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Julie Yeater
Indiana Department of Education,
Office of Career and Technical Information

Nancy Zemaitis
Vocational Rehabilitation Services
The future is not someplace we are going to
But one we are creating
The paths are not to be found,
But made,
And the activity of making them,
Changes both the maker
And the destination. — John Schaar
# Table of Contents

**Introduction and Overview** ........................................................................................................................................................................... ix

**Section 1 Sharing the Responsibility: From Policy to Practice**
- Senate Enrolled Act 606 ........................................................................................................................................................................ 4
- Components of Vocational Rehabilitation Policy and Indiana’s Special Education Title 511, Article 7 ...................................................... 4

**Section 2 Working Together: Partners in Transition**
- Collaboration .................................................................................................................................................................................. 15
- Student .................................................................................................................................................................................... 16
- Parents/Families ........................................................................................................................................................................ 16
- School District ........................................................................................................................................................................... 17
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services .................................................................................................................................................. 19
- Community Supports .............................................................................................................................................................. 20
- Working Together: Sharing Resources ........................................................................................................................................... 24

**Section 3 Creating Possibilities and Forging Solutions**
- Employment Considerations ................................................................................................................................................................. 29
- Social Relationships ........................................................................................................................................................................ 30
- Transportation ................................................................................................................................................................................ 30
- Assistive Technology ........................................................................................................................................................................ 31
- Health Care Issues ........................................................................................................................................................................ 32
- Medicaid Waiver Services ............................................................................................................................................................ 32

**Section 4 Tool Kit**
- Frequently Asked Questions .......................................................................................................................................................... 37
- Glossary of Terms ........................................................................................................................................................................... 44
- Indiana Transition Resources ........................................................................................................................................................ 49
- National Transition Resources ......................................................................................................................................................... 50
Transition describes the process by which a student moves from school to adult life in the community.

Transition goals include employment, post-secondary education/training, adult living outcomes, and community participation.

Everyone experiences transitions throughout their lives. Transitions bring new opportunities and new challenges that can be both exciting and intimidating. For students with disabilities, the transition from high school to adult life is a complex process that requires planning and coordination to ensure appropriate supports and positive outcomes. No single path is right for all students. Rather, transition is an individual journey that builds upon a student’s interests, strengths, experiences and goals for the future.

Transition has historically been complex and confusing for students with disabilities and their families as they leave the world of school entitlement and enter the maze of adult services. While a student is in school, one agency (the school district) is responsible for providing and/or coordinating services. Entitlement to special education and related services ends when a student receives a high school diploma or certificate of completion. After a student leaves school, there is no one agency to replace the school’s role. Instead, several service providers may be involved in providing supports. Students and families must look to different agencies for different services such as community living supports, employment supports, post-secondary education and training, and financial aid. Each of these agencies may have different
eligibility requirements and different application procedures.

Through collaborative partnerships, the transition process is intended to assist students and their families to prepare for the future, identify support needs, and connect with community resources. By planning for supports and connecting with community resources prior to leaving school, students may continue to receive the necessary services to achieve their transition goals.

The purpose of this guidebook is to convey Indiana’s Vocational Rehabilitation Service’s transition policy and its role in the transition planning process. This guidebook will primarily be used by vocational rehabilitation services’ staff and school personnel to strengthen their collaborative activities, enhance transition planning, and improve student’s outcomes. This information will also benefit students and their parents/ families by outlining what they can expect from the collaborative efforts of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and schools during the transition process.

Information includes the following:

- **SECTION 1** summarizes the key transition components of Indiana’s Special Education Title 511 Article 7 and Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services’ policy and outlines the timelines for transition activities.

- **SECTION 2** highlights the roles and responsibilities of local stakeholders in the transition process.

- **SECTION 3** discusses additional issues and considerations that are critical to achieving successful transition outcomes.

- **SECTION 4** presents a tool kit of definitions and resources that may be helpful to the transition partners.
You cannot hope to build a better world without improving the individuals. To that end, each of us must work for his own improvement, and at the same time, share a general responsibility for all humanity. —Marie Curie
Brittney is a 20-year-old student who lives with her parents. She wants to work full-time after completing high school. Because of her mild cognitive disability, she has received academic and vocational support from her teachers and transition coordinator. Brittney began working towards her employment goal three years ago by identifying her interests in a career exploration class. The transition coordinator developed a vocational profile by observing her during community activities including job shadowing at local businesses.

Brittney likes working with people and prefers an office environment.

Brittney, her family, and the school invited the vocational rehabilitation counselor to the case conference held during her junior year. The vocational rehabilitation counselor shared information about the array of services that Vocational Rehabilitation Services offers to assist her in achieving her job goal. During the conference, the vocational rehabilitation counselor made an appointment with Brittney to take an application for services. The summer before her senior year, the vocational rehabilitation counselor determined Brittney eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

Through decisions made at her final case conference during her senior year, the school began sharing responsibilities with Vocational Rehabilitation Services for job coaching and other supports being provided by an adult rehabilitation agency. The Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) written by Brittney and her vocational rehabilitation counselor outlined her career goals and complimented her Individualized Education Program (IEP) transition goals. This connection with vocational rehabilitation services and an exchange of information ensured that Brittney would continue to pursue her job goals and receive the necessary supports for a successful transition to employment.

Brittney and other students with disabilities are fortunate that a number of services are available to support them as they transition from high school to adult life because of two landmark pieces of legislation, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992 and 1998. In 1990, IDEA defined transition as:

A coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process, that promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. (Department of Education, 1992, p. 44804)

IDEA states that for each student by age of 14, or earlier if appropriate, the individualized education program shall include a statement of the student’s transition service needs, focused on the student’s course of study . . . and by the age 16, the IEP must include a statement of needed transition services, including, if appropriate, interagency responsibilities or needed linkages. Section 300.347 (b)(2).

The law goes on further emphasizing shared responsibility for transition services by incorporating a provision: if a participating agency, other than the public agency, fails to provide the transition services described in the IEP in accordance with 301.347(b)(1), the public agency shall reconvene the IEP team to
identify alternative strategies to meet the transition objective for the student set out in the IEP. The law states: Nothing in this part relieves any participating agency, including a State vocational rehabilitation agency, of the responsibility to provide or pay for transition services that the agency would otherwise provide to students with disabilities who meet the eligibility criteria of that agency. Section 300.348 (a)(b).

The Rehabilitation Act of 1992 and subsequently 1998 Amendments mirror IDEA’s definition of transition services however adding that transition services must promote or facilitate the achievement of the employment outcomes identified in the student’s individual plan for employment. Section 7 (36 and 12) and 103 (a) (15).

The Indiana State Board of Education, Special Education rules, Title 511, Article 7, and Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services’ policies outline required transition practices for school personnel and vocational rehabilitation counselors, respectively. While the regulations and policies provide guidelines, often the common practices and relationships between Vocational Rehabilitation Services and schools vary between geographical areas. By training school personnel and vocational rehabilitation services field staff on the expectations of the legislation and policies, we hope to provide consistent practices and services across Indiana.

The state legislation focused on the collaboration process between schools and Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services by amending the Senate Enrolled Act 606 on July 1, 1999. Key components of the Senate Enrolled Act 606 include the following guidelines for vocational rehabilitation counselors:

- With adequate notice, the vocational rehabilitation counselor will attempt to attend the case conferences of students who may be eligible for services. For students likely to be eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation Services, conferences should be attended the year prior to the student’s exit from high school.
- Provide written information and be available on a consultative basis to public agency personnel, students, and families to assist in identifying appropriate transition services.
- Perform the duties of advocate and consultant to students and, where appropriate, to the students’ families.
- Promote communication with the students and families by attending appropriate student activities, including, upon request, case conferences, career days, family and student forums, and other consultative services on behalf of students.
- No later than the beginning of the last semester of a student’s educational program, application for vocational
rehabilitation services should be taken for students who may be eligible.

✓ The Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) shall be developed by the vocational rehabilitation counselor and the student prior to an eligible student’s exit from high school. The IPE should be coordinated with the student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) and the student’s transition goals.

✓ Identify the involvement of other federal, state and local agencies in the planning process, including Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD), Social Security Administration (SSA), Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services (BDDS), Community Mental Health Centers (MHC), Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP) and Area Agencies on Aging (AAA).

✓ Annual consultation shall occur between Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the school to review transition-age students and identify potential students who might be eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Additionally, Senate Enrolled Act 606 eliminates the requirement for schools to identify students at age 14 who might benefit from Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Vocational rehabilitation counselors are no longer required to track students from age 14.

The following table illustrates the key components of the transition portions of Indiana’s Special Education, Title 511, Article 7 and Vocational Rehabilitation Services’ policy, their respective roles and timelines for transition activities. The final column labeled suggested activities provides examples of activities and practical applications which schools and vocational rehabilitation counselors may find useful to enhance their collaborative efforts.
### Transition Requirements and Suggested Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Components</th>
<th>Indiana’s Article 7</th>
<th>Indiana’s VRS Policy</th>
<th>Suggested Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>When should you start transition planning?</strong></td>
<td>Age 14, or earlier, if determined appropriate by the case conference committee. [511 IAC 7-28-3]</td>
<td>Upon obtaining authorization to disclose confidential information. [Section 18(a)]</td>
<td>➡ Sophomore case conference committees identify students who would benefit from Vocational Rehabilitation Services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who is involved?</strong></td>
<td>• Student&lt;br&gt;• Parents/family&lt;br&gt;• At least 1 regular education teacher.&lt;br&gt;• At least 1 special education teacher.&lt;br&gt;• A representative of the school.&lt;br&gt;• Agency representatives or individual invited by parent or school. [511 IAC 7-27-3]</td>
<td>Public agency (school) and vocational rehabilitation counselor shall confer at least one time per year to review transition age students. [Section 18 (a)]</td>
<td>➡ The vocational rehabilitation counselor and school staff meet to discuss potential pool of eligible students who could benefit from Vocational Rehabilitation Services. The vocational rehabilitation counselor and school staff meet to discuss potential pool of eligible students who could benefit from Vocational Rehabilitation Services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What activities should occur?</strong></td>
<td>• Annual meeting with vocational rehabilitation counselor to review transition-age students.&lt;br&gt;• Age 14 (or earlier if appropriate) the Individualized Education Program shall include a statement</td>
<td>• Annual review with school.&lt;br&gt;• Attend annual student case conferences in the last two years of the student’s education programming.</td>
<td>➡ Vocational rehabilitation counselor attends transition fair. &lt;br&gt;➡ Vocational rehabilitation counselor attends students’ case conferences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Components</td>
<td>Indiana’s Article 7</td>
<td>Indiana’s VRS Policy</td>
<td>Suggested Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What activities should occur? (continued)</td>
<td>of the student’s transition service needs, based on career considerations and focused on the student’s courses of study.</td>
<td>• No later than the beginning of the student’s final semester, determine when application will be taken.</td>
<td>➤ In consultation with school staff, vocational rehabilitation counselor identifies students in general education classes who might be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• At case conference prior to the student’s entry into high school or age 16 (or earlier if appropriate), a statement in the Individualized Education Program shall include a statement of needed transition services.</td>
<td>• Provide written information to students and families on array of services.</td>
<td>➤ With a minimum 2-3 weeks notice, vocational rehabilitation counselor agrees to attend identified students’ junior and senior case conferences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Schools shall reconvene the case conference committee when necessary to identify alternative strategies to meet transition goals. [511 IAC7-29-1] 28-3f</td>
<td>• Provide consultation to school, students and families.</td>
<td>➤ Strategies the school may use to include vocational rehabilitation counselors:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Transfer of rights to student at age 18. [511 IAC 7-28-4] (b) If a student who has attained eighteen (18) years of age has a guardian appointed pursuant to IC 29-3-1, the rights under this article shall transfer to the guardian unless specifically otherwise provided in the guardianship proceeding.</td>
<td>• Advocate for students.</td>
<td>• Identify conference dates as early as possible, or at least 2-3 weeks in advance for calendar planning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Where appropriate, students instructional activities should include acquisition of daily living skills.</td>
<td>• Promote communications with student and families by attending school events focusing on transition, career, and/or employment.</td>
<td>• Consider scheduling back-to-back conferences with vocational rehabilitation counselor to limit time away from office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Call vocational rehabilitation counselor to ensure availability prior to scheduling case conferences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Components</td>
<td>Indiana’s Article 7</td>
<td>Indiana’s VRS Policy</td>
<td>Suggested Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What activities should occur? (continued)</td>
<td>skills and a functional vocational evaluation [511 IAC 7-28-3] (1) (B)(v)</td>
<td>• Consider offering vocational rehabilitation counselor space to hold office hours in local school each month with published schedule.</td>
<td>• Vocational rehabilitation counselor should be flexible for scheduling during case conference weeks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Vocational rehabilitation counselor provides written material and Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services’ School to Work Transition brochure to students and their families.</td>
<td>➤ Vocational rehabilitation counselor sets an appointment with students and their families to complete the vocational rehabilitation services application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Vocational rehabilitation counselor takes student’s application prior to beginning the last semester of the educational program.</td>
<td>➤ If the student drops out of high school prior to application and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Key Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What activities should occur? (continued)</th>
<th>Indiana’s Article 7</th>
<th>Indiana’s VRS Policy</th>
<th>Suggested Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Related services <strong>could</strong> include (but are not required):</td>
<td>If the student is determined eligible for vocational rehabilitation, the Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) is completed prior to the student exiting high school, corresponds to and builds upon the Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals.</td>
<td>eligibility determination, the school refers the student to vocational rehabilitation counselor.</td>
<td>Vocational rehabilitation counselor funds person-centered planning sessions or vocational profile to further develop students’ vocational goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community-based work experiences.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>During an exiting student’s final year of educational program, the vocational rehabilitation counselor and the student will write the Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) building upon the Individualized Education Program’s (IEP) goals and objectives. The vocational rehabilitation counselor may choose to attach the Individualized Education Program to document and refer to its complementary objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assistive technology to perform job tasks.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) will outline an overlap of services for a smooth continuation of supports and the attainment of successful transition outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Vocational exploration and career development supports.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Job coaching in community-based work settings.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rehabilitation counseling by a qualified professiona.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Section 1**

Sharing the Responsibility: From Policy to Practice
### Key Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What rehabilitation activities should you expect? (continued)</th>
<th>Indiana’s Article 7</th>
<th>Indiana’s VRS Policy</th>
<th>Suggested Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| What are the outcomes? | Schools, students, families and communities work together so students with disabilities:  
  • Achieve appropriate involvement and progress in general education.  
  • Are prepared for employment, post-secondary education, independent living, and community participation.  
  • Achieve improved student outcomes in employment, post-secondary education, independent living, and community participation. | Activities result in employment, post-secondary education or training, community participation and adult living outcomes. | Employment services may be authorized in the final semester when either a limited overlap of job coaching is necessary or a final job placement is unlikely.  
➤ The school’s transition coordinator, special education teacher, and/or job coaches will act as consultants to the adult rehabilitation agency staff as they begin to overlap supports during the students’ final semester in high school.  
➤ Students are placed in competitive community-based jobs that will continue after exiting high school.  
➤ Students are working sufficient hours and earning sufficient wages to meet their individual needs.  
➤ Students are receiving post-secondary education or training.  
➤ Students are adequately supported on their jobs and connections are made to continue the needed services upon exit. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Components</th>
<th>Indiana’s Article 7</th>
<th>Indiana’s VRS Policy</th>
<th>Suggested Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| What are the outcomes? (continued) | | | ➤ Students and families are knowledgeable of the local resources, the application and eligibility process.  
➤ The transition component of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) contains goals addressing the students’ interests for employment, community participation, recreation/leisure, and community living. Issues that will impact successful transition outcomes (such as transportation needs) have also been addressed. |
Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has. —Margaret Mead
The spirit of both federal and state legislation are for agencies to collaborate and coordinate transition services. As partners in the transition process, a variety of individuals and organizations come together to achieve successful transition outcomes. Typically, decisions and services are improved by the multiple perspectives, the variety of information and the shared resources. This section highlights key roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in the transition process and discusses opportunities to share resources.

Contributing Factors to Successful Collaboration

- Students, families, teachers and community stakeholders jointly make decisions.
- Participation is driven by a desire to assure students are adequately served.
- Service delivery emphasizes innovation and flexibility.
- Administrations of collaborating agencies are committed to local cooperation.
- Sufficient time is allocated by agency administrators for staff to participate.
- Active participation and attendance in meetings promotes open communication.
- Relationships are maintained by written policies that describe ongoing roles and responsibilities.
- Local agreements are kept current.
- Coordinated collection of needs assessment data from each agency.
- Measurable short-term and long-term goals are identified when planning activities.
- Program effectiveness is monitored by an ongoing graduate follow-up study.

Adapted from New York Transition Services: A Planning and Implementation Guide
Student

The student is the focal point of transition planning. With appropriate supports, a student will identify his/her desired post-school outcomes for education/training, employment, adult living, community participation and recreation/leisure. The student’s role with appropriate support if needed, in the partnership is to:

• Prepare for the case conference meetings. Identify desired persons to participate in the case conferences, meet at a mutually agreed upon place and time, and/or prepare invitations for the meeting. With practice and support, many students learn to lead their own IEP meetings.
• Identify personal strengths, preferences, interests and needs. These may be demonstrated through a portfolio, resume, video resume or discussion about school and community-based experiences.
• Identify and share support preferences, accommodations, and modifications needed for success in school and in the community.
• With supports, take a leadership and decision-making role in all discussions.
• Assume age of majority rights unless exempted by court-appointed guardian.
• Take responsibility for ensuring that the transition plan is implemented as stated.

Parents and Family Members

Parents and family members keep the case conference committee grounded and focused on the student’s goals. They actively participate in finding essential support services and in developing the
transition component of the Individualized Education Program (IEP). Providing critical information regarding the student’s strengths and needs enhances the students’ transition outcomes. The parents’ and family members’ role in the partnership is to:

- Prepare the student for meaningful participation in the IEP process.
- Provide information about the student’s interests, strengths and support needs.
- Provide information about the student’s independent living skills.
- Engage in all aspects of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) planning, discussion and decision making.
- Identify friends, family and community members who can be part of the case conference committee.
- Identify and invite community support services to case conferences.
- Participate in referrals to transition programs and adult services (e.g., Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services, community rehabilitation providers, community mental health centers).
- Follow-up on Vocational Rehabilitation Services and other service providers’ appointments.
- Seek assistance in obtaining community and residential services, as needed.

- Assist in obtaining information on Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicaid, Medicaid Waivers, identification cards, and/or transportation passes.
- Plan for long-term financial support, Social Security, trust funds, or other supports.
- Take responsibility for ensuring that the transition plan is implemented as stated.

School District

The school district is the primary coordinator and provider of transition services for all students with disabilities receiving special education services. The school district’s role in this partnership is to:

- Prepare students and parents/families for leadership roles in the
Individualized Education Program (IEP) process.
• Prepare all students for active and productive adult lives in the community.
• Assist students to determine their preferences, strengths and needs related to post-secondary goals.
• Provide information on students’ progress on the current Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals.
• Provide teachers strategies for instruction, accommodations and modifications.
• Suggest courses of study and experiences related to the students’ interests and goals.
• Assist students, parents/families and case conference committees to write a student-focused statement of needed transition services in the Individualized Education Program (IEP).
• Assist students and parents/families to identify needed related services to facilitate the movement from school to adult services.
• Link students and parents/families to services, agencies or supports before students exit school.
• Coordinate all the people, agencies, services or programs during the transition process.
• Advocate with the student.

A variety of school personnel participate in the planning and delivery of transition services. School personnel include:

General, Vocational, and Special Education Teachers
The teacher’s role and responsibility is to provide academic and social skill instruction in the school setting as well as build students’ connections through community-based experiences. Instruction should also include self-determination and self-advocacy skills. Through these efforts, students are more likely to experience a smooth transition from school to post-secondary environments.

Transition Coordinator
The transition coordinator’s role is to connect students and families to community resources. Each school system may define the role of the transition coordinator differently. However, typical activities include 1) developing marketing materials for the transition program, 2) providing job training, 3) supervising integrated work experiences and developing community-based competitive jobs, 4) referring to and coordinating adult service providers, 5) conducting program evaluation, and 6) organizing and facilitating local transition councils.
Guidance Counselor
The guidance counselor provides counseling, career guidance, and post-secondary information. Ensuring students are academically prepared for their career goals, guidance counselors assist students in scheduling classes to meet the academic requirements as well as teach occupational skills.

Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, Speech Therapist and/or Nurse
Each of these related services personnel are instrumental in assisting students with physical and special health care needs during the transition process by providing consultation to the teachers, transition coordinators, employment specialists and/or employer. Information related to work-related tasks or skill performance issues that may be affected by the student’s physical disability, health care needs, or communication skills should be discussed.

Principal/Administrator
The principal’s or administrator’s role is providing leadership, guidance, and support to teachers, students, and parents/family members. An inclusive environment offering the necessary supports to promote the success of all students is established and maintained through flexible programming, creative problem solving, and adequate resource allocation.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) is a federally funded program designed to assist individuals with disabilities to prepare for, secure, or retain employment. To be eligible for VRS, a person must (1) have a physical or mental impairment that is a substantial impediment to employment; (2) be able to benefit from vocational rehabilitation services in terms of employment; and (3) require VR services to prepare for, enter, engage in and retain employment. The vocational rehabilitation counselor’s role in this partnership is to:
- Provide guidance and information to the case conference committee.
- With appropriate notice, attend junior
and senior case conferences to discuss array of services.
• Determine student’s eligibility for Vocational Rehabilitation Services prior to exiting school.
• Write an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) with eligible students prior to exiting school.
• Maintain student’s employment support through an overlap of services, if appropriate.
• Implement person-centered strategies and informed choice with all individuals.
• Coordinate and oversee individualized employment services necessary to sustain individuals in jobs in which they are satisfied.
• When it is appropriate, the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor will refer a student to other agencies and organizations.
• Advocate with the students.

Community Support Services

A wide array of support services exists in local communities. By blending community supports and resources, transition programs can respond more effectively to the students’ and communities’ needs. As these groups work together, they initiate a smooth transition to adult life. The community support services’ role in this partnership is to:
• Participate and provide information in case conferences.
• Explain eligibility criteria for adult services.
• Assist student and parents/families in the application process for supports and services.
• Alert students and parents/families to potential waiting lists for services and other potential challenges to obtaining services.
• Provide services to students prior to exiting the school system, as appropriate.
• Attend student-focused events such as transition fairs, employment fairs, etc.
• Advocate with the students.

Descriptions of the many agencies and organizations that provide supports during the transition process can be found in the Section 4. The common partners include the following:

Area Agencies on Aging (AAA)
Area Agencies on Aging is a case management, information and referral system that provides services to eligible individuals who are aging or disabled. With the goal of improving the quality of life of families and children, AAA offers a coordinated approach to seeking and accessing appropriate services. Their activities include the following:
• Support individuals with disabilities to live independently in their own homes.
• Provide an array of services to prevent premature or inappropriate institutionalization.
• Consolidate/coordinate services and funding options
• Manage Medicaid Waiver applications and coordinate Medicaid Waiver services.

Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services (BDDS)
Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services coordinates person-centered services for eligible individuals with developmental disabilities to foster independence, self-sufficiency, and active community participation. While their eligibility criteria differs, BDDS and Vocational Rehabilitation Services share a joint application and eligibility process. The BDDS’ funds and coordinates:
• Residential services and supports
• Long-term supported employment services
• Developmental/habilitation services
• Support services, such as transportation and other related living expenses.

Community Health Centers
Community Health Centers provide a medical treatment to anyone in the community who would otherwise lack a regular source of primary and preventative health care services. Service will be provided to those most in need. This includes Medicaid and Medicare patients, uninsured, and underinsured patients and special populations that may exist. Special populations may include migrant and seasonal farm workers, the homeless, HIV/AIDS patients, ethnic minorities, the elderly, pregnant women, and others with
special health needs and/or geographic, cultural, and economic barriers. Services are provided to all without regard to ability to pay. No one should be denied services.

For students with special health care needs, the Indiana Department of Health, Maternal and Child Health Bureau assists families in finding a medical home and care coordination. Call (317) 233-5578 for more information.

Community Mental Health Centers

Community Mental Health Centers provide mental health and chemical addiction treatment services. They offer a wide range of psychological and behavioral services, including individual and group counseling, short-term therapies, psychological testing, psychiatric services, crisis intervention/emergency services, clinical consultation services, and other related services which address emotional, social, and behavioral needs. Coordination of services and follow-up with inpatient psychiatric hospitals are also available.

Community Mental Health Centers offer Community Support Services (CSS) to individuals with severe and persistent psychiatric needs. CSS may include a wide variety of psychosocial rehabilitation services, i.e., mental health case management, partial hospitalization and day treatment services, educational classes, medication clinics, residential living, supported living and other types of community-based housing, employment services, and social clubs or clubhouses. The goal of Community Support Services is to enhance community integration in the individual’s living, learning and working environments.

Community Rehabilitation Programs

Community rehabilitation programs provide a variety of services that support eligible individuals to work, live and participate in their communities. Services may be paid for by multiple funding sources including an individual, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Medicaid Waiver, or Bureau of Developmental Disability Services (BDDS), local and private funders. Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to actively participate in the selection of community rehabilitation programs to meet their needs. Community rehabilitation programs provide the following services:

- Employment services (job development, job placement and job coaching)
- Supported living and independent living services
- Adult habilitation services
- Respite care
- Case-management and coordination
- Personal assistance
One-Stop Centers and Work-One Centers

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development operates multiple One-Stop Centers and Work-One Centers that provide free career services and employment information to all Indiana residents. Each One-Stop and Work-One Centers have an Information Resource Area (IRA) which contains resources and references on career exploration, local labor market information, applications, resumes, interviewing, and job retention. The IRA also has internet access and access to ALEX (Automated Labor Exchange) to assist individuals locate job openings. Other services include:

• Career counseling on education, training, careers and local employers.
• Tours of the One-Stop Center and orientation to services.
• Community outreach to schools for career planning.
• Information on colleges/universities, financial aid, and scholarships.
• Referral to appropriate community resources including training services.

For communities without One-Stop Centers, the local Indiana Department of Workforce Development Express Center may maintain similar resources.

Post-Secondary Institutions

Students with disabilities may request accommodations that will enable them to participate in and benefit from all education programs and activities. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 requires each academic institution that receives federal funding to offer accommodations on an individual basis. Additionally, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act Services requires that post-secondary schools be prepared to make appropriate accommodations and reasonable modifications to their college procedures and practices, so that all students can participate in the same programs and activities that are available to students without disabilities. Post-secondary training institutions rely heavily on students to provide documentation of their disability, identify their needs, explain how their disability effects their learning, and advocate on their own behalf. College, university, and technical school visits should include an interview with the Disabled Student Services Director of a prospective campus or training institution. Examples of typical services offered include (but are not limited to) the following:

• Test accommodations such as extended time, readers, or scribes
• Note takers
• Recorded text
• Tutoring
Working Together: Sharing Resources

By working together, groups increase their knowledge of each other and the organizations they represent. As trust is built and collaborative partnerships are strengthened, territorial issues may significantly diminish and collaborative problem solving may increase. Through this shift, a non-traditional blending of resources may occur as individuals and agencies work together to support students’ transition goals. Available resources that are increased include the following:
- Number of people committed to achieving a goal
- Momentum to achieve the goal
- Areas of expertise
- Variety of skills and skill levels
- Practical experience in the field
- Networking connections
- Variety of services
- Knowledge of alternative funding sources

This pool of resources could be utilized in numerous ways to develop promising transition practices and to assist students achieve their transition goals. Typical examples are:

🌟 Shared office space
- An organization may have a free office space that could be used once a week by a visiting vocational rehabilitation counselor.
- Offer a variety of publications and brochures.

🌟 Shared technology
- School provides computer and internet access for vocational rehabilitation counselor while meeting with students.
- School provides voice mailbox on school phone system for vocational rehabilitation counselor’s local contact number.

🌟 Shared funding sources
- Staff ride together and share expenses for professional development conferences.
- School pays for the job development activities and VRS pays for the job site training.

🌟 Shared staff
- Two organizations may each not be able to afford a full-time person, yet each could afford a half-time person. The two agencies could hire one person and split the employee’s time.
- School subcontracting job coaching services from a community rehabilitation program.
Shared job development leads
• Community rehabilitation providers, transition coordinators, school job coaches, Department of Workforce Development staff and vocational rehabilitation counselors may exchange job leads during luncheons, transition council meetings, chamber of commerce meetings, over the telephone or via e-mail.
• Participate in locally driven computerized job bank, including opportunities for job shadowing, work experiences and apprenticeships.

Shared ideas for accommodations and modifications
• Use of JAN (Job Accommodation Network) and other technology centers in both the education of staff and how staff collaborate in their use.
• Request an assistive technology evaluation by Vocational Rehabilitation Services in the student’s final year to plan for transfer of technology to the employment setting.

Shared knowledge of alternative funding sources and grants
• Collaborative grant writing to show true state-level, regional, and local partnerships.

Develop local resource guide on public and private funding options for adult services.

Interagency Cross Training
• Schools and agencies invite personnel to attend sponsored training with common interests such as Vocational Rehabilitation Services may invite school personnel to attend a training on job development.
• Plan an annual fall meeting to review changes in each organization’s policies and procedures.

In today’s reality of increased demands for services and corresponding decreases in available resources, creative solutions are essential. Collaborative partners bring to the table knowledge of the eligibility requirements of their programs and types of services that can be used to support students’ goals. Resources and Funding for Transition suggests strategies for identifying alternative funding sources. Several questions suggested from this text which might help identify creative funding options are:
  ? What part can the school play?
  ? What services is the student eligible for outside the school setting?
  ? What public/private agencies provide the necessary services/equipment?
What is the most likely source of funding?

Has the student applied for Social Security Disability, Supplemental Security Income, Medicaid or Medicaid Waiver?

What part can the parent/family play?

What additional funding needs are there?

While there are no quick or simple solutions to meet a student's specific support needs and balance the community's resources, it is more likely that viable solutions will be found through a collaborative funding approach and a shared distribution of services.
Creating Possibilities and Forging Solutions

You see things and say “Why?”
But I dream things that never were and say “Why not?”    —G.B. Shaw
Effective transition plans include strategies for addressing a variety of issues that impact students’ goals for employment, education, training, housing and community participation. This section highlights some of the additional issues that may need to be addressed to support successful transition outcomes.

**Employment Considerations**

**Satisfaction with job**
While developing the Individual Plan for Employment (IPE), the vocational rehabilitation counselor, the student and family members should address the student's interests and abilities compared to the student’s experiences and expectations. The student’s satisfaction and job retention will be directly related to the efforts made in matching the student’s interests and strengths to the requirements of the job.

As with any job, advancement opportunities should also be evaluated when considering a position. The position may enhance the student’s skills and offer the opportunity to move closer to his/her long-term employment goal.

**Expectations of hours worked**
Identifying the number of hours necessary for satisfactory employment is critical to plan for other meaningful activities throughout the day. It is important to remember that without daily school activities, there may be large amounts of unscheduled time. Therefore, planning should consider the individual’s entire day and determine the amount of time and support needs for other non-employment activities that will need to be developed to complete the day.

**Wages and fringe benefits**
The opportunity to earn competitive wages, to receive time off for illness and vacations, and to participate in a company sponsored health insurance plan are important factors in determining the value of a potential job.

The effect of wages on current benefits. Eligibility and benefit levels of multiple types of assistance such as housing, training, financial aid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and food stamp programs may be reduced or eliminated by employment income. Questions should be referred to the case manager of the particular agency to determine the impact of employment on the student’s benefits before accepting employment. Current policy (Social Security 1619a and 1619 b) allows individuals to earn more wages without losing their Medicaid health insurance.
Social Relationships

Appropriate social behavior, interpersonal skills and communication skills are important for successful employment and community life. One of the major voids in a young adult with disabilities’ life after leaving school is the lack of regular contact and interactions with their school friends. Developing and maintaining new friendships is essential for individuals to be included in all aspects of community life. Students and family members should consider the variety of opportunities the student will have to make new friends and build social relationships. Employment settings and recreation and leisure activities are wonderful avenues to establish social relationships.

Transportation

Transportation options vary with communities making it difficult to generalize. However, all students and their family member should consider their future needs in terms of finding, accessing, and using transportation alternatives. Even after students complete academic or vocational training and are ready to enter the workforce, most discover their choices of employment are limited by the availability of accessible transportation.

Obtaining a driver’s license and purchasing a car, may allow the most independence for students. Driver’s training may be offered as part of the high school’s curriculum. To accommodate students with disabilities, the school may extend the course to allow for a year of training rather than a one-semester course. Driver’s training may also be obtained from a private driving school or rehabilitation facility. Refer to your local telephone yellow pages for local driving schools. Vocational rehabilitation counselors may also be aware of specialized drivers’ training options as well as vehicle adaptations and modifications to support students.

Availability of transportation is not the only impediment to independent travel for students with disabilities. They must also know what transportation systems are available, how to access transportation, how to plan their travel, and how to execute their travel plans safely. Before exiting school, it is beneficial for students and their families to learn about the transportation services that are offered in their communities. For many students, learning how to travel on public transportation requires systematic training. Typically, a special education curriculum integrates transportation training into work experience and community-based activities. In communities without public transportation services, students must rely on other modes of transportation i.e.
friends, neighbors, or family members. In order to retain employment, it is important for job coaches to identify and develop natural supports (for example, coworkers) to provide a variety of solutions for a student’s transportation needs. It is essential that transportation needs and the necessary supports are clearly identified and continue after students exit school to maintain students’ mobility in their communities.

**Assistive Technology**

Assistive technology (AT) devices and services are necessary to enable individuals to have greater control over their lives; to participate in, and contribute more fully to activities in their home, school and work environments, and in their communities; to interact to a greater extent with individuals who do not have disabilities; to otherwise benefit from opportunities that are taken for granted by individuals who do not have disabilities. (P.L. 100-407 and 103-218 Title 5, section 2-3)

Assistive technology (AT) that is fairly simple is often called “low tech”. Low tech devices are typically non-electrical (or battery operated) such as large button phones, tape recorders, or portable room intercoms. More sophisticated, electronically based devices are called “high tech”. High tech items include such things as power wheelchairs, augmentative communication devices, and environmental control systems.

Assistive technology (AT) services will assist students and their families find the AT device that best accommodates each student’s strengths, unique abilities, and needs. Examples of assistive technology (AT) services include:

- Getting help to know what devices are available
- Getting help to know where to obtain services
- Getting help to pay for devices
- Getting devices repaired
- Getting help to determine what devices best matches the individual’s needs

On those occasions when a school has provided a student with an assistive technology device and the student is ready to transition to Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), the student and VRS must determine if the device will continue to meet the student’s needs for employment or other training programs. If the school does not wish to retain the device for use by another student, the vocational rehabilitation counselor may wish to consider proposing to purchase the device from the school at a depreciated cost, otherwise known as the Assistive Technology Buy-out Methodology.
Health Care Issues and Insurance

Obtaining or maintaining health care and health insurance coverage is a major issue facing young adults with disabilities and chronic health conditions as they transition from high school. For families raising children who have special health care needs, the concept of a “medical home” is important. It provides access to a comprehensive, family-centered, culturally competent systems of care to meet the complex needs of children with chronic conditions. Ensuring access to continuous quality health care may be affected by changing eligibility rules.

There are many ways that youth with disabilities may qualify for Medicaid or Medicare. Understanding how to maintain uninterrupted health care insurance is critical. Students and family members should begin talking early with their Care Coordinators to ensure uninterrupted services and health insurance.

Medicaid Waiver Services

Medicaid Waivers are for individuals who were traditionally thought to require the level of care provided in a nursing facility, hospital, institutions or “intermediate care facility for the mentally retarded” (ICF/MR). There are a variety of home and community-based services, not otherwise reimbursed by Medicaid, that are available under one of the five separate waiver services:

1. the aged and disabled,
2. individuals with autism,
3. individuals wanting to leave an ICF/MR or those who want to avoid an ICF/MR or institutional setting,
4. medically fragile children, and
5. individuals who have a traumatic brain injury.

If a student receives a Medicaid Waiver while still in school, there are many ways it can complement transition services when families, individuals, case managers, and schools work together.

Within each waiver program, there are specific services students can access to meet their needs. The Medicaid Waiver programs are funded with both state and federal dollars and have been initiated by the Indiana General Assembly and approved by the Federal Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA).

Eligibility for each waiver program requires:

1. The recipient must meet Medicaid guidelines.
2. The recipient would require institutionalization in the absence of the waiver and/or other home-based services.
3. The total cost of serving the recipient on the waiver (waiver cost plus other Medicaid services) cannot exceed the total cost to Medicaid for serving the recipient in an “appropriate” institutional setting. Some exceptions may be made based on an individual’s need for services.

Students and family members should apply as early as possible given that in some areas, waiting lists extend into multiple years. To apply for any of the Medicaid Waivers, contact the applicant’s local Area Agency on Aging (AAA) office or call 1-800-985-3505 to be connected to your local AAA office.
We need to remember that a lifetime on SSI is a lifetime on the margins - and likely in poverty.
We need to believe that our young people deserve - and can have - a better life than that. —Susan Daniels
1. What are indicators to determine a quality transition program?

Several factors have shown to be strong predictors of post-school success:

- Students and families need to be actively involved throughout the transition process.
- Use of person-centered planning approaches.
- A secondary curriculum that prepares students to work and live in the community.
- Integrated services that foster greater inclusion in the school and the community.
- Career awareness and exploration at the elementary and middle school levels.
- Career development philosophy that infuses career information from early childhood settings through the students’ educational experiences.
- Local business needs have significant impact on the design of secondary curriculum.

2. What are some strategies for including students with disabilities in school-to-work initiatives?

Presented below are possible strategies to ensure the equal access and full participation of all youth, including youth with disabilities, in school to work activities. The strategies are suggestions and serve as a starting point for further discussion on how to best meet the needs of all youth in school to work systems. The strategies are organized around the National Transition Alliance’s Transition Five Categories of Practices Framework for Examining Effective School to Work Practices.

- Student-focused planning and development includes practices that focus on planning and developing educational programs for each individual student.
- Career pathways and contextual learning features school-based and work-based curricula and activities that relate to career exploration and development.
- Student and family involvement highlights practices that involve...
parents and families in planning and delivering educational and transition services.

• Business and community involvement includes practices that encourage business, labor unions, community service agencies, youth development organizations, government agencies, and other community resources to participate in all aspects of school to work systems.

• Structures and policies represent program practices and characteristics that relate to the effective and efficient delivery of school to work transition services.

Supported employment is designed to serve students who have traditionally gone into sheltered workshops and day activity centers. Supported employment is paid employment in an integrated setting for those individuals who because of the severity of their disability, need ongoing support to ensure their success. The basic belief is that all people, regardless of the severity of their disability, can do meaningful, productive work in community job settings. Supported employment seeks to adapt the conditions of employment on an individual basis to meet the needs of the individual and the employer.

4. What agencies provide supported employment services?

Local school districts have the responsibility to assist students with disabilities in obtaining employment after they leave through transition planning. Other agencies who may assist school personnel in achieving this goal include Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Community Mental Health Centers, and Community Rehabilitation Programs. These agencies and information about them should be shared with students and families at transition planning meetings and case conferences.

3. Is there an alternative to sheltered employment for students with severe disabilities?

Supported employment is designed to serve students who have traditionally gone into sheltered workshops and day activity centers. Supported employment is paid employment in an integrated setting for those individuals who because of the severity of their disability, need ongoing support to ensure their success. The basic belief is that all people, regardless of the severity of their disability, can do meaningful, productive work in community job settings. Supported employment seeks to adapt the conditions of employment on an individual basis to meet the needs of the individual and the employer.
5. How can Vocational Rehabilitation Services assist students in going to college?

Vocational Rehabilitation Services will work in coordination with the traditional financial aid process to determine their contribution towards tuition, student fees or books and supplies. VRS cannot exceed the amount of unmet financial need which is determined through the college financial aid office. The student must self-disclose and provide documentation to both VRS and the college. The student must be eligible for VRS, have a disability that results in a substantial impediment to employment and be able to benefit from VRS services. VRS may support specific disability related accommodations to participate in post secondary training as part of the Individual Plan for Employment (IPE). Consult your local VRS Office with your specific questions regarding post secondary supports.

6. How can I determine if a student should apply for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits?

Only the student or his/her parents or guardian can apply for SSI benefits. Some students are already participating in SSI. Others may be eligible but have never applied. To be eligible a student must meet Social Security Administration’s (SSA) disability, income and resources requirements. Prior to a child’s 18th birthday his/her family income is considered for eligibility. When a student turns 18 the family income is no longer counted.

Social Security Administration’s requirements for disability determination are not the same as educational requirements for participation in special education. Not all students identified as disabled under IDEA will meet SSA’s requirements for receiving SSI benefits. SSA requirements are focused on medical conditions or combination of conditions that hinder an individual’s ability to work. School personnel can assist a student and his/her parents in the application process and provide supporting documentation to SSA during eligibility determination. The final determination of the eligibility is made.
by SSA based on their specific rules and regulations.

To initiate the application process the student, parent or guardian must make an appointment with the local Social Security Administration office. The will be provided with an application form to be completed. Once Social Security Administration has all the required information a determination of eligibility will be made. Benefits often associated with SSI, including Medicaid, will differ from state to state. State SSI supplements vary. In the majority of states a student who receives SSI is also eligible for Medicaid. In Indiana, however, a separate application for Medicaid benefits is required through the State, Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) under the Division of Family and Children (DFC). Students, parents, and school personnel must be aware of their individual state requirements and procedures. The local SSA office will provide state specific information and assistance.

7. What information will Social Security Administration need to process a student’s application for SSI benefits?

In general Social Security Administration requires:

- The student’s social security number,
- A birth certificate or other proof of birth,
- Documentation of income and resources of the student and family,
- Medical records and other documentation about disabling conditions and limitations,
- Names and addresses of everyone who has worked with or treated the student. Disability Determination Services (DDS) may require additional information from medical records and service providers and the family. School personnel will often receive questionnaires from the Social Security Administration office requesting additional information on a student. It is important that school personnel respond to these requests.

Schools have a great deal of information on special education students. Much of this information, however, is related solely to the educational performance of students. Social Security Administration (SSA) is concerned with functional limitations as they apply or may apply in a work setting. SSA will often seek additional information.
from school personnel on a student applying for SSI. School personnel can provide SSA with information on observed performance of students in a variety of situations, including work sites. School personnel should be careful to provide complete information to SSA. Incomplete records, including interviews, therapy notes, and psychological test records may result in an application being disapproved. Anecdotal information can be provided by teachers, job coaches, and other school personnel regarding employment related functional limitations to assist SSA in making eligibility determinations. (Meeting the Needs of Youth with Disabilities: Handbook on SSI Work Incentives and Transition Students.)

8. How can students work and maintain their benefits?

Some special education students are eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) work incentives through the Social Security Administration. These work incentives could be included in IEP development and support the transition process through community-based vocational training and other employment options. The work incentives could allow the student to participate in employment experiences and continue to maintain their SSI benefits. Eligibility requirements for SSI benefits are established by the Social Security Act and Regulations.

To be eligible, a person, of any age, must have little or no income or resources, be considered medically disabled, and initially earning less than $700 gross monthly.


In addition, the National Transition Network (NTN) has several publications describing benefits available under the Social Security System for individuals with disabilities.

These Supplemental Security Income benefits include the Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS), Individualized Work Incentive Program, The Student Earned...
Income Exclusion, and Property Essential to Self-Support (PESS). NTN may be contacted at 612-626-8200 or http://ici2.coled.umn.edu/ntn/default.html In addition, the telephone number of the Social Security office in your locality may be found by calling 1-800-722-1213. Some programs/terms that you should be familiar with are:

a. Continuation of SSI Eligibility - Section 1619(a) of the Social Security Act: Individuals can receive SSI benefits even if they earn above SGA as long as they continue to meet all other SSI eligibility requirements. This allows individuals to begin working and still maintain eligibility for cash benefits up to a certain income limit. Individuals who are eligible for 1619 (a) receive both case benefits and Medicaid.

b. Continuation of Medicaid Eligibility - Section 1619(b) of the Social Security Act: Individuals whose earnings become too high for case payments can still get Medicaid coverage after their SSI benefits stop. To be eligible, individuals must still have a disabling impairment, need Medicaid coverage to work, earn gross income at levels that are insufficient to replace Medicaid with private insurance, and continue to meet the financial criteria of the SSI program.

c. Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWE) - Certain impairment-related items and services needed to work can be deducted from gross monthly earnings. Deducing these costs can reduce counted earnings below SGA, help maintain program eligibility, and increase monthly SSI cash benefits. Examples include personal assistance to prepare for or travel to work, adaptive equipment or special devices, special transportation, job coach services, medical equipment, etc.

d. Plan for Achieving Self Support (PASS) - PASS allows an individual to exclude income and/or resources that SSA would otherwise count when determining SSI eligibility. When used under the approved plan, the money set aside in a PASS will not be counted by the SSI program. The PASS requires very specific information, including both a realistic work goal, the intended job or profession that the applicant want to pursue and a timetable with specific steps for reaching the work goal. Examples of items to be funded through a PASS are vocational services, costs associated with an education or occupational training program, tuition, books, transportation costs, assistive technology and work site modification, etc.
Section 4

Tool Kit: Frequently Asked Questions

9. How can drivers’ education be funded to improve in dependence in transportation?

Students with disabilities should have access to school-based drivers’ education programs along with their non-disabled peers. Special education services and supports may be necessary to modify the curriculum, support a student in the learning process or adapt the driving simulators/learning vehicles. These services may also be purchased from private providers as well. If drivers’ education is part of the students Individualized Education Program (IEP), the school has a responsibility to identify training resources and coordinate training. If general education peers are required to pay a fee for drivers’ education, the student with disabilities must also pay the same basic fee. Many schools have discontinued their drivers education programs. Drivers training may also be considered as part of an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) under Vocational Rehabilitation Services as it relates to transportation to the place of employment.

10. What is the role of vocational education in the student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP)?

Research indicates that students with disabilities who participate in vocational education and training are more likely to stay in school, be employed and be employed at higher wages than students who have not participated in vocational education, training or work experience (Blackorby and Wagner, 1996; national Assessment of Vocational Education, 1994). Therefore, it is clearly appropriate and advisable to include vocational education and experiences in the student’s courses of study to assist in preparing him or her to transition from high school to post-school environment.

“Specifically-designed instruction means adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child under this part, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction.” (34 CFR §300.26(b)(3)) It is important that the IEP team, including the student and the vocational educator, determine the supplementary aids and services, adaptations, modifications, accommodations and supports needed by the vocational education teacher that will assist the student achieve satisfactorily in the regular education setting.
Area Agency on Aging (AAA)

Area Agencies on Aging are part of a statewide network of non-profit organizations which plan, coordinate, and fund services for older adults and persons with disabilities. Each Area Agency on Aging helps callers find answers to questions, guides them to appropriate resources.

Accommodation

Refers to any alternation of existing facilities or procedures to make them readily accessible to persons with disabilities.

Advocate

A person who speaks on behalf of another person or groups of persons or supports and an individual in advocating for himself/herself.

Age of Majority

The legal age at which an individual, under State law, has adult rights transferred to them. In Indiana this occurs at age eighteen. A person is considered to have arrived at majority at the age of 18, and thereafter has control of the person’s own actions and business and has all the rights and is subject to all the liabilities of citizens of full age, except as otherwise provided by state statute.

Assistive technology

Assistive technology is any piece of equipment or product that is used to maintain or improve the functional capacity of individuals with disabilities.

Assistive Technology Buy-Out Methodology

A specific approach to affixing a depreciated value on devices or equipment which Vocational Rehabilitation Services may wish to purchase from a local school corporation to support an individual in an employment or training setting.

Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services (BDDS)

A section of the Division of Disability, Aging, and Rehabilitative Services of Indiana’s Family and Social Services Administration. The Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services plans, develops and administers a variety of services for people who have developmental disabilities. Services available for persons with developmental disabilities are community based, residential alternatives to placement in state institutions and health facilities. Programs support independent living in the least restrictive setting possible and are based on a Person-Centered Planning process.

Community Mental Health Centers

Agencies which provide services to persons with significant behavioral or mood disorders that are not related to mental retardation or developmental disabilities.

Community Rehabilitation Agencies

Agencies which provide rehabilitation and employment opportunities, training, and job placement to persons with disabilities.

Courses of study

Refers to the type of educational program that a student is enrolled in including vocational education, college preparation and apprenticeships.

Community-based services

Activities of instruction and teaching which occur in natural community environments, such as work sites, shopping centers and restaurants.

Community-support services

All generic services (accommodations, person in the environment or practices) that help an individual in conducting life activities, including employment.
Disabled Student Services  
The Disabled Student Services (DSS) Office coordinates academic accommodations for enrolled students with documented disabilities in higher education institutions. Accommodations are determined on a case-by-case basis and may include classroom relocation, sign language interpreters, recorded course materials, note taking, and priority registration.

Educational agency 
A public or private entity that provides educational services; including special education and related services.

Entitlement 
Programs that must be provided to all eligible persons on demand. Special education and Social Security are entitlements, many adult services are not.

Eligibility criteria 
A set of rules that determines whether an individual or family is qualified to receive services based on the nature and severity of the disability, income or other characteristics.

Employment specialist 
An employment staff person who is employed by a school, community mental health center or community rehabilitation program to perform one or all of the employment services such as assessment, job development, job placement, job site training and supports, on-going supports. May also known as a job coach or employment consultant.

Habilitation 
The coordinated use of medical, social, educational, and vocational measures for training or retraining individuals disabled by disease or injury to the highest possible level of functional ability. Several different types of habilitation are distinguished: vocational, social, psychological, medical, and educational.

Indiana Article 7 
Indiana State Board of Education Special Education rules.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) 
The IEP is a written document required of all students in school who have been classified as needing special education programs or related services under Indiana Title 511 Article 7. The document should include the student’s present level of functioning in each identified needs area, a statement of annual goals for the students, a statement of appropriate short-term objectives with the evaluation approach and evaluation criteria for determining progress toward achievement of annual goals, a statement of any required related services and who will provide them, a statement of transition services needs (beginning at least by age 14), and a statement that relates to the issue of least restrictive environment for the student relative to each of the programs and services to be provided.

Individual Plan of Employment (IPE) 
The vocational rehabilitation counselor and consumer jointly determine the job the consumer is ultimately to be placed in and plan the services necessary to reach that job goal. The job goal, intermediate objectives, services, and service providers are specified in an Individual Plan of Employment (IPE).

IDEA 
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act is an updated version of the Education of All Handicapped Children’s Act (EHA) which required the statement of needed transition services as part of the IEP in 1990.

IEP Team 
The group of persons, as described in Article 7 (511 IAC 7-27-3) including parents and public agency personnel, who are responsible for:
- Determining a student’s eligibility for special education and related services.
- Developing, reviewing, and
revising a student’s individualized education program.

- Determining the appropriate special education services and placement for a student and the setting or settings in which those services will be provided.
- Determining other matters that are assigned to an IEP team by federal law or to a case conference committee by state law or any rule of the Indiana state board of education.

Integrated employment

Employment where a person with disabilities has a real job in settings where the interactions are primarily with people who are nondisabled.

Inclusion

The process of including person with disabilities in the environments and activities of typical persons. Inclusion is sometimes used interchangeably with the term “integration”.

Information Resource Area (IRA)

A physical area of the Work-one & One-Stop Centers located within Indiana’s Workforce Development Offices where individuals have access to employment related materials, resources and electronic equipment.

Independent Living Centers

Established by the Rehabilitation Act in response to consumer and People First Movements. Independent Living Centers, also known as Centers for Independent Living (CILS), are run predominantly by consumers and can fund or support accommodations in vehicles and housing to make persons with disabilities more independent.

Job coach

See employment specialist.

Medicaid

A health care program serving low-income persons with disabilities whose income and assets are below a specific level. Generally available to persons receiving SSI or SSI work incentives.

Medicaid Waiver

A process whereby a person eligible for Medicaid receives services in a community setting rather than in an institutional setting. Call your local Area Agency on Aging at 1-800-986-3505. The Indiana Governor’s Planning Council for People with Disabilities has produced an informative booklet, Indiana Medicaid Home and Community-Based Waivers Services: A Guide for Consumers.

Medical Home

A medical home is not building, house or hospital, but rather an approach to providing health care services in a high-quality and cost-effective manner. Children and their families who have a medical home receive the care that they need from a pediatrician or physician (pediatric health care professional) who they trust. The pediatric health care professionals and parents act as partners in a medical home to identify and access all the medical and non-medical services need to help children and youth achieve their maximum potential.

One-Stop Center/Work-One Center

Connecting employment, education, and training services into a coherent network of resources at the local, state, and national level.

Post-secondary education or training

Any education program beyond high school that has an academic, vocational, professional, or preprofessional focus is considered post-secondary education. This may include a specific class adapted to meet the person’s specific goal or interest. It may also include a vocational or educational course of study to pursue a certificate or degree.
Person-centered planning
An array of planning approaches that tailor services and supports to meet the needs of the individual, as opposed to programs that try to fit individuals into available services.

Rehabilitation Act
The federal legislation of vocational rehabilitation services for people with disabilities. The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) was established by Congress as the principal Federal agency authorized to carry out this implementation and oversight.

Related services
Those services, other than special education services, that are necessary for a student to benefit from special education. Examples include speech therapy, physical therapy, and occupational therapy. Other related services include auxiliary services, computers, wheelchairs, summer schooling, and many others. PL 94-142 describes related services as those that are supportive of and may or may not be part of classroom instruction, including transportation, counseling, assistive technology, and so forth.

Respite care
“Respite” refers to short term, temporary care provided to people with disabilities in order that their families can take a break from the daily routine of caregiving. Unlike child care, respite services may sometimes involve overnight care for an extended period of time.

Stakeholder
One who has a share or an interest in transition services and student movement from high school to adult life.

Social Security Administration (SSA)
The federal agency that oversees the provisions of Social Security Disability and Supplemental Security Income and related work incentives.

Step Ahead Councils
Step Ahead is a comprehensive, statewide process which provides a coordinated approach to deliver needed services to individuals, children and families in their communities. This process provides an effective way to channel resources so that each resource builds upon previous work accomplished at the local level, allowing greater responsiveness to Hoosiers in need.

Self-determination
The ability and opportunity for a person to make decisions for themselves.

Self-advocacy
The ability and opportunity to speak on behalf of one’s self.

Social Security Disability Insurance
A monthly check provided to children of parents who have retired or become disabled and have paid into Social Security or for young people over age 18 if they have a disabling impairment that began before age 22 (commonly referred to as a “disabled adult child” [DCA]). Young people may also earn SSDI benefits through their own work history.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
Pays monthly checks to people who are 65 or older, or blind, or have a disability and who do not own much or have a lot of income.

Transition coordinator
A person (or agency) who is responsible for assuring that planned transition services for a student with a disability are provided in a timely manner and in a way that complements other services.

Transition councils
Representative groups of persons at the local level who are organized to enhance the availability, accessibility, and quality of transition services. Interagency collaboration and team-building offer service providers and community members the opportunity to exchange information, establish policies/refer procedures, share information/resources, and identify students in need of specific services and programs.
Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS)

Provides comprehensive, coordinated, effective, efficient and accountable services needed by eligible individuals with disabilities to prepare for, enter, engage in and retain employment consistent with each individual’s strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities and informed choice.

Workforce Development (DWD)

Provides career planning, labor market information, job search materials, and job matching services to all Indiana residents. Additional services for eligible individuals include unemployment insurance, veteran’s services, and training. The services can be accessed through the local Express Center, One-Stop Center or Work-One Center.
Indiana and National Transition Resources

Indiana Resources

ATTAIN (Assistive Technology Through Action in Indiana)
101 E. Walnut St.
Washington, IN 47501
(812) 254-7305
(888) 288-9319
Web: www.attaininc.org/

Bureau of Aging and In-Home Services
Division of Disability, Aging & Rehabilitative Services
Indiana Family & Social Services Administration
402 W. Washington St., Room W454
P.O. Box 7083
Indianapolis, IN 46207-7083
(317) 232-7000; (800) 545-7763
Web: www.ai.org/fssa/HTML/PROGRAMS/2bAging.html

Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services
Division of Disability, Aging & Rehabilitative Services
Indiana Family & Social Services Administration
402 W. Washington St. Rm. W 453
P.O. Box 7083
Indianapolis, IN 46207-7083
(317) 232-0570 (877) 851-4106
Web: web.indstate.edu/soe/iseas/dse.html

Division of Mental Health
Indiana Family & Social Services Administration
402 West Washington Street, Room W353
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2739
(317) 232-7845
Web: www.ai.org/fssa/HTML/PROGRAMS/2c.html

Division of Special Education
Indiana Department of Education
State House, Room 229
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2798
(317) 232-0570 (877) 851-4106
Web: web.indstate.edu/soe/iseas/dse.html

Indiana Department of Workforce Development
10 North Senate
Indianapolis, IN 46204
1-888-WorkOne
Web: www.state.in.us/dwd/

Indiana State Department of Health
Maternal and Child Health
Children’s Special Health Care Services
2 N. Meridian Street, Section 7-B
Indianapolis, IN 46204

(317) 232-7842 (800) 545-7763
Web: www.ai.org/fssa/HTML/PROGRAMS/2bDDS.html

The Indiana Governor’s Planning Council For People With Disabilities
143 West Market Street, Suite 404
Indianapolis, IN 46204
(317) 232-7770; (317) 232-7771 (TTY)
Web: www.state.in.us/gpcpd/

Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services
4701 N. Keystone Avenue, Suite 222
Indianapolis, IN 46205
(317) 722-5555; (800) 622-4845; (800) 838-1131 (TTY)
Web: www.state.in.us/ipas

Indiana Career and Post-Secondary Advancement Center (ICPAC)
2805 East Tenth Street
Bloomington, IN 47408
(800) 992-2076
Web: www.icpac.indiana.edu

Independent Living Centers: State Directory
(800) 545-7763 ext 21367
Web: www.state.in.us/fssa/HTML/DIRECTORY/ILcenters.html

(317) 233-5578
Web: www.state.in.us/isdh/
IN*SOURCE
Parent Training and Information Project
809 North Michigan Street
South Bend, IN 46601-1036
(219) 234-7101 (V/TTY); (219) 239-7575 (TTY)
(800) 332-4433 (In Indiana)
Web: www.insource.org

Indiana Parent Information Network, Inc.
4755 Kingsway Drive, Suite 105
Indianapolis, IN 46205-1545
(317) 257-8683
Web: www.ipininc.com

Indiana Institute on Disability and Community
2853 East Tenth Street
Bloomington, IN 47408-2696
(812) 855-6508; (812) 855-9396 (TTY)
Web: www.iidc.indiana.edu

Office of Medicaid Planning and Policy
Indiana Family & Social Services Administration
402 W. Washington St., Rm. W453
P.O. Box 7083
Indianapolis, IN 46207-7083
(317) 232-1319; (800) 545-7763
Web: www.ai.org/fssa/StepAhead/digest.html

Step Ahead
Bureau of Child Development
Indiana Division of Family and Children
402 W. Washington Street W386
Indianapolis, IN 46204
(317) 232-1144; 1-800-441-7837
Web: www.ai.org/fssa/StepAhead/digest.html

Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Division of Disability Aging, and Rehabilitative Services
Indiana Family & Social Services Administration
402 W. Washington St., Rm. W453
P.O. Box 7083
Indianapolis, IN 46207-7083
(317) 232-1319; (800) 545-7763
Web: www.ai.org/fssa/HTML/PROGRAMS/2bVRS.html

National Resources

Association on Higher Education and Disability
P.O. Box 21192
Columbus, OH 43221-0192
(614) 488-4972

Fax: (614) 488-1174
Web: www.ahead.org

Association for Persons in Supported Employment (APSE)
1627 Monument Avenue
Richmond, VA 23220
(804) 278-9187
Fax: 804/278-9377
Web: www.apse.org/

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 20191-1589
Toll-free: 1-888-CEC-SPED
(703) 620-3660
Fax 703-264-9494
Web: www.cec.sped.org/

Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT)
DCDT-CEC
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 20191-1589
(703) 620-3660
Web: www.ed.uiuc.edu/SPED/dcdt/

ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education
Ohio State University
Center on Education and Training for Employment
1900 Kenny Rd
Columbus, OH 43210-1090
(800) 848-4815, ext. 26991
Web: www.ericacve.org

Great Lakes Disability & Business
Technical Assistance Center
University of IL/Chicago
Department on Disability & Human
Development
1640 West Roosevelt Road
Chicago, IL 60608
(312) 413-1407 (V/TTY); (800) 949-4232
(V/TTY)
Web: www.adagreatlakes.org

Heath Resource Center
One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20036-1193
(202) 939-9320 (voice/tty)
Web: www.acenet.edu/programs/HEATH

JAN: Job Accommodation Network
West Virginia University
PO Box 6080
Morgantown, WV 26506-6080
1-800-526-7234 (V/TTY)
Web: www.jan.wvu.edu/english/contact.htm

National Information Center for Children
and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY)
P.O. Box 1492
Washington, DC 20013-1492
(800) 695-0285
(202) 884-8200 (Voice/TTY)
E-mail: nichcy@aed.org

National Transition Network
Institute on Community Integration
University of Minnesota
Patee Hall
150 Pillsbury Dr., SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455
(612) 624-1062

Midwest Regional Parent Center
Ohio Coalition for the Education of
Children with Disabilities (OCECD)
Bank One Building
165 West Center Street, Suite 302
Marion, OH 43302-3741
(740) 382-5452 voice
(740) 383-6421 fax
E-mail: oceed@gte.net
Margaret Burley, Regional Director
CO, IL, IA, IN, KS, KY, MI, MN, MO, NE,
ND, OH, SD, WI

PACER Center
4826 Chicago Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55417-1098
(612) 827-2966 voice
(612) 827-7770 TTY
(612) 827-3065 fax
1-888-248-0822 (toll-free nationally)
Web: www.pacer.org

Rehabilitation Research and Training
Center on Workplace Supports (VCU-RRTC)
Virginia Commonwealth University
Rehabilitation Research & Training
Center
P.O. Box 842011
Richmond, VA 23284-2011
(804) 828-1851
Web: www.vcu.edu/rrtccweb

Social Security Administration
U.S. Department of Health and Human
Services
1801 L. St., NW
Washington, DC 20507
(800) 772-1213
Web: www.ssa.gov

The Association for Persons with Severe
Handicaps (TASH)
29 W. Susquehanna Ave., Suite 210
Baltimore, MD 21204
Ph: 410-828-8274
Fax: 410-828-6706
Web: www.tash.org