

Here are the promised follow ups from our recent Transition Support Group. As always we talked about understanding the options your family member has as they move through their transition from school to adult life.

- 1) Legally, schools are required to provide specific services related to transition. Here is the legal definition of transition in the IDEA

Defining Transition Services

So, what are “transition services” exactly?

Transition services are defined in IDEA 2004 as:

“a coordinated set of activities for a student that:

- A. is designed to be within a results-oriented process that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child’s movement from school to post-secondary activities, including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;
- B. is based on the individual child’s needs, taking into account the child’s strengths, preferences, and interests; and
- C. includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-secondary adult living objectives, and when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.” (Section 602, (34)).

Transition services are highly individualized and what might work for one student may not be appropriate for another. Transition services can be considered to be services and supports needed by a student with disabilities in order to make a successful transition from school to adult life.

Successful transition planning is a lifelong process in which the student, family members, friends, and professionals come together to develop and act upon a plan of action that will lead to a successful adult life.

For this reason, transition planning has become a part of several Federal laws. The most encompassing of these laws, the 2004 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), focuses on transition as a way to facilitate the student’s movement from school to post-secondary activities.

When thinking about transition services and IDEA, it is helpful to consider three major principles:

- Transition is **results-oriented**
 - Transition is **student-centered**
 - Transition is a **coordinated effort**
- 2) If you need support to advocate for school choice for your family member, Missouri Protection and Advocacy (<http://www.moadvocacy.org/>) is a great resource.
 - 3) Transition is a critical time to plan and to involve the student in decision making. We will review some life planning tools in November.

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