

## Transition timeline for families of children with special needs

This document is provided to guide and assist parents, students and educators with discussion and action items that may make the transition to adulthood simpler and less overwhelming - allowing parents and students time to research and explore options.

To view this document and access the links on your phone please scan this QR code. You will be directed to the CCSD transition resource website where you can access the document.



### Ages 14-15 (or earlier):

- If not already completed, apply for the [NOW/COMP Waiver](#) (financial resources and supports for individuals with developmental disabilities). Although this is a medicaid waiver, your child does not have to be on medicaid for the initial screening.
  - The application can be found [here](#) or on their [website](#).
  - If you need help filling out the application please contact our parent mentor, [Jerolee Oshack](#), or visit/call our local [Area Agency on Aging](#).
  - Read more [here](#) about how the waiver can help .
- Explore recreation opportunities or extra-curricular activities and sports provided by the school, Parks and Recreation (including therapeutic/adapted recreation), Special Olympics, Extra Special People Miracle League and/or other organizations.
  - Refer to the community access services section on our [transition website](#) or section 2 & 5 of the resource manual for a list of Athens area providers and social groups.
- If you haven't already done so, think about and research the option of setting up a **Supplemental Needs Trust**. Research the pro's and con's.
  - Watch this [webinar](#) for more information on special needs trusts and financial planning.
- Prepare for the **Transition to HS** and beyond by looking at the [Transition tips for parents](#). The Transition Plan is added to a student's IEP by the age of 16 or before they enter HS. The case manager will assist the team in developing goals that are relevant to the student's post-secondary goals and that will assist the student in researching and achieving his/her outcome goals.
- Review the high school course requirements for graduation as well as understanding the differences between the [high school, alternate and special education diplomas](#).
- Research **Post-Secondary Inclusion Programs** to determine if this is the best option for your child. Post-Secondary Inclusion Programs can be found [here](#).
- **Network with other parents** to gain insight and recommendations regarding various service providers including doctors, dentists, financial planners, etc. Having your child in activities such as Miracle League and Special

Olympics is a great way to also build your networking circle and support from family/friends. Most importantly, find resources and join a support group through [Parent to Parent](#) (P2P) of Georgia.

- o Refer to the community access services section on our [transition website](#) or section 5 of the providers and resource manual for a list of Athens area providers and social groups.

### **Ages 16 - 17:**

- Read previous (Ages 14-15 or earlier) Recommended Action Items and identify actions that need to be addressed – including **recreation and social opportunities, Transition plan in the IEP, Financial Planning**, and the **DBHDD NOW/COMP waiver** application (this is very important to begin taking action at this stage).
- Understand that the parent's rights are transferred (**Transfer of Rights and Age of Majority**) to the student at age 18 - this includes educational, medical and financial records. [The Age of Majority](#) is the legally defined age at which a person is considered an adult, with all the rights and responsibilities of adulthood. In Georgia, that age is 18, all rights and responsibilities automatically transfer to a student with a disability at the age of majority. The school system will always include the parents in educational decisions, but ultimately the student will have final say in his/her educational future unless a parent has legal guardianship.
- Begin Discussions on obtaining **Guardianship** of your child and what that would look like for your family. There are a variety of options ranging from full guardianship, limited, financial, medical and supported decision making.
  - o Attend a workshop/webinar provided by [p2p](#) to learn more about guardianship
  - o Review more resources [here](#)
- By age 16, obtain a **state ID** if not obtaining a drivers license. [Apply here](#).
- Think about **future living plans** and what the long term plan is. Make plans for your son/daughter that will give you peace of mind if anything should happen to you.
  - o Refer to the community residential services section on our [transition website](#) or section 1 of the providers and resource manual for a list of Athens area providers.
- Research and understand the components of **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)**, application process and how the individual's income is affected and the changes that occur when they turn 18.
  - o Read more on SSI renewal at 18 [here](#)
- Update the **Transition Plan** with the IEP team with a continued focus on career interests and exploration, job training and/or enhancing independence and post-secondary options. The student will always be invited to the IEP meeting so that s/he can develop career and independent living goals and have a say in his/her preferences. The student will be encouraged to participate in the IEP meeting by providing information and giving feedback and sharing his/her post-secondary goals. The **Transition Plan** will cover post-secondary education, career and living goals as well as develop goals and action steps to guide the student in preparing for his/her post-secondary goals. The Transition Goals and Activity items may include the following: Education and Training, Employment, Community Access and Participation, Adult Living Skills, Daily Living Skills, and Related Services.
- Decide on a **date of exit** for your child. This will ensure both you and your child are prepared for exiting. If Exiting at age 18 then all tasks for ages 19-21 will need to be completed next year.
- Sign up to receive services from [GVRA Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation \(VR\)](#). VR will provide a pre-employment transition services (pre-ets) class which teaches students job skills such as self advocacy and workplace readiness. These classes will take place at school during the school day. If found eligible, your child will move to a VR caseload where the VR case manager will assist them in finding a job through a supported employment agency.
  - o Find the application [here](#) and return it to your child's case manager.
  - o Here is a brief explanation of [pre-ets classes](#) from the provider (Hi Hope Service Center)
  - o Here is a brief explanation of the process of [Supported Employment](#)
  - o Refer to the job assistance section on our [transition website](#) or section 3 of the providers and resource manual to research more about the supported employment providers in our area.
- Find opportunities for your son/daughter to volunteer and **gain social and vocational experience** outside the school system, such as following set rules, procedures and multi steps directions.
  - o Refer to the community access services section on our [transition website](#) for a list of Athens area providers and social groups.

### **Age 18:**

- Read previously Recommended Action Items and identify actions that need to be taken – including **recreation and social opportunities, Financial Planning, future living plans, SSI** (if applicable), **State ID, DBHDD NOW/COMP waiver** application and **date of exit**.
- Re-apply for **SSI** at the age of 18 (typically 1 month after the 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and only claim income/expenses of person – not household).
  - Benefits change when your child turns 18, review this [document](#) for more information.
- If not already applied, apply for Medicaid. As with SSI, your child is now considered an adult with a developmental or intellectual disability and income is not a factor at this age.
- Individuals can apply for Guardianship (if appropriate) at the age of 18. Start the petition process ahead of time by gathering information. However, do not file with courts until the day after 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
  - Review information shared for ages 16-17 on Age of Majority and Guardianship.
- Meet with your VR counselor to move from a pre-ets caseload to a VR caseload. Once deemed eligible for services, your student will need to be evaluated to see what type of supports they will need while on the job. Your VR counselor will refer you to a supported employment agency.
  - You can find more information [here](#) about the process and types of supports your child can receive through the service of supported employment.
  - Refer to the job assistance section on our [transition website](#) for a list of Athens area providers.
- Schedule visits to post-secondary options (Post-Secondary Inclusion programs, Vocational Training programs, Day Programs, Host Homes, Residential Facilities and options for Self-Directed-In-Home Services.)
  - Refer to the community access and community residential services section on our [transition website](#) for a list of Athens area providers.
- Develop a transportation plan for life after graduation. Transportation is often the biggest barrier for independence.
  - Refer to the transportation section on our [transition website](#) or section 6 of the providers and resource manual for a list of Athens area providers.
- If your student is exiting this year then the following items for ages 19-21 will need to be completed this year.

### **Ages 19-21 (or completed by the time the student exits):**

- Review all previous action items and identify any areas that have not been completed.
- If you have completed the SSI, Guardianship (if applicable), NOW/COMP Waiver, Medicaid, VR and Financial Planning (including the legal will) ..... Congratulations! You have hit many milestones for your child's future!
- The Transition Plan Goals and Actions will continue to address the student's independent living skills, vocational skills and community access.
- If you are on the planning list for the NOW/COMP Waiver, call your NOW/COMP Planning List liaison at the beginning of the semester your child will graduate (exit school) and let them know that your child will be graduating/exiting soon (give them the date). Update the needs assessment if applicable so that funds may be available sooner rather than later upon graduation.
- If you will receive the NOW/COMP waiver, attend trainings by [p2p](#) to decide how you and your adult child will utilize self-directed funds.
- If attending a post-secondary program (Post-Secondary Inclusion programs, Vocational Training programs, Day Programs, Host Homes, Residential Facilities and options for Self-Directed-In-Home Services) complete necessary applications to enter the program or waiting list.
  - Refer to the community access services section on our [transition website](#) for a list of Athens area providers.
- The Summary of Performance will be completed prior to graduation which will identify final present levels and necessary accommodations. The SOP is an important document that gives a brief overview of your child so that anyone supporting them in the future can have something to reference.

**\*Graduation (The term graduation for this document reflects the date a student exits the school system and not the graduation ceremony):**

Students with IEP's and on a modified curriculum may be served by the education system until the age of \*22. In Clarke County, the student will graduate the semester he/she turns age 22 (unless the IEP team determines otherwise based on mastered IEP goals).

**\*Transition Plan**

IDEA mandates that all children with IEP's ages 16 and over must have a transition plan within the IEP. They must also be invited to attend the meeting when the transition plan is being discussed. The Transition Plan is meant to support the child in exploring and meeting his/her post-secondary goals in the areas of education and training, employment and Independent Living.

For information about Transition and Transition Resources, please visit our [website](#). You may also contact the Transition Specialist for Clarke County School District if you have any questions:

*Liza Burnsed, Transition Specialist*

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