



Student and Family Transition Planning Checklist

Preparing for life after high school is an important step. Planning early and building independence over time helps students have better outcomes as they move toward their chosen path. Transition is not a single event—it is a process that happens gradually.

This guide is designed to support students and families as they prepare for life after high school, whether that path is Apprenticeship/Trade, Post-Secondary Education, Community or the Workplace. Each pathway is valuable and can lead to meaningful and successful opportunities.

Of note: As students move through high school, caregivers play an important role in the transition process. Over time, their role shifts from being the main manager of appointments, communication, and decisions to becoming a coach and support person. Instead of doing tasks for their teen, caregivers gradually encourage them to speak up for themselves, manage their time, solve problems, and make informed choices. This gradual release of responsibility helps students build confidence, independence, and self-advocacy skills that are essential for success in post-secondary life.

Grades 7–8 (Early Preparation & Awareness)

- Explore student strengths and interests, and learn about the pathways after high school
- Learn about high school: schedules, expectations, course options
- Review and update the IEP annually, with a focus on skill building
- Get your student involved in understanding themselves, and planning for high school and beyond

Grades 9-10 (Transition to Secondary School)

- Explore high school course options and impact: course stream choices (academic/applied/locally-developed), Specialist High School Major, co-op, dual credit, OYAP and other
- Practice managing school work and deadlines with less direct supervision
- Build skills in areas such as: organization, time management, assistive technology
- Continue to review IEP annually, matching long-term goals and skill development to IEP accommodations and alternative learning programs
- Explore interests, strengths, and learning preferences



- Begin discussing possible pathways, apprenticeship/trade, community, college, university, workplace, and what the requirements are to enter these pathways
- Attend school or board-run transition/pathway events.

Grades 11-12 (Post-Secondary Preparation and Transition)

- Research your top pathway choice(s)
 - What should you expect in this pathway?
 - How should you prepare - what skills or knowledge do you need to focus on building?
- Determine and work towards the requirements for your post-secondary pathway:
 - Are there application deadlines for programs or financial support?
 - Have I met high school course requirements to graduate and for my next level of education or work?
 - Do I have the disability documentation I need to access services?
- Look for options to try out your top pathway choice(s)
 - Attend school and community fairs or transition events
 - Go to campus or workplace tours
 - Enrol in a co-op or dual credit course
- Determine your needs
 - Understand how your disability may impact you
 - Focus on building skills that you will need in the future
 - Determine which needs may require workplace or academic accommodations, and learn about the process to arrange those