



Educational Guide, Part 1

Pathway to Post-Secondary Education

Rights and Support Provided to Children with Disabilities in the United States

IDEA

- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a legislation that guarantees the provision of services to children with disabilities across the United States. It establishes guidelines for states and public agencies regarding the delivery of early intervention, special education, and related services to eligible infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities. IDEA ensures that appropriate support is provided to individuals with disabilities throughout their developmental and educational journey (Department of Tennessee, n.d.).

ADA

- Once students leave high school, individuals are covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act (Department of Tennessee, n.d.).
- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a legislation that safeguards against discrimination towards individuals with disabilities in various aspects, including employment, public accommodations, communication, and access to state and local government programs and services. It ensures that individuals with disabilities have equal opportunities and accessibility, promoting inclusivity and eliminating unjust treatment based on disability status (U.S. Department Of Labor, n.d.).

Who Should be Involved During Post-Secondary Education Transitioning Meeting?

Student

- It is important that the student themselves participate in the meeting to advocate for themselves by talking about their interest, preference, needs and goals.

Administrators

- They advocate for an inclusive environment that supports students with disabilities.
- Assume the responsibility of evaluating the effectiveness of transition planning, ensuring best outcomes for these students.

Teachers

- They can provide valuable insight on student's academic performance, potential necessary accommodations
- Provide strategies to help them become successful during education.

Guidance Counselor

- They can provide guidance, resources, and expertise on post-secondary educations options, career exploration and vocational training.

Caregivers

- Provide valuable insight on their child's interest, needs, strength. They can contribute by advocating for their child, discuss their goals, necessary accommodations to help support their child's successful post-secondary education transitioning.

Therapists (OT, PT, SLP)

- They can collaborate with the student, their family, and educational team to develop meaningful transitioning goals related to the student's therapy needs.
- Bring their expertise in accessing functioning abilities, recommending accommodations, and promoting independence to the process.

Service Provider Agencies

- Provides their expertise in supporting students with disabilities.
- They contribute their specialized knowledge to develop transition goals, accommodations, and supports tailored to the student's needs.
- They work closely with post-secondary institutions, ensuring appropriate accommodations and services.

Reference: [https://www.tn.gov/education/districts/federal-programs-and-oversight/idea.html#:~:text=The%20IDEA%20\(reauthorized%20in%202004,school%2C%20or%20secondary%20school%20education](https://www.tn.gov/education/districts/federal-programs-and-oversight/idea.html#:~:text=The%20IDEA%20(reauthorized%20in%202004,school%2C%20or%20secondary%20school%20education)



Educational Guide, Part 2

Pathway to Post-Secondary Education

Advocating for Your Child During IEP Meetings

Start by Understanding IEP Process

- [Tennessee Department of Education](#)

State's Special Education Laws and Regulations

- [Tennessee Department of Education](#)

Prepare for IEP Meeting

- Review their child's current IEP thoroughly.
- Gather any relevant documents and assessments related to their child's education and needs.
- Write down any questions, concerns, or goals they want to discuss during the meeting.

Communicate with the Team

- Establish open and collaborative relationships with the team to ensure effective communication and collaboration throughout the IEP process.

Active Participation Meetings

- Caregivers should share their observation, opinions, and goals for their child's education.
- Ask questions, clarification, request modification, and request modification if necessary.

Collaborate

- Collaborate with the team to develop meaningful and measurable goals for your child.

Request Appropriate Services

- If you believe certain accommodations and services would benefit your child, it is important to advocate for them. By doing so, you can ensure that your child receives the best possible learning experience within their educational setting.

Things to do for a Successful Post-Secondary Education for your Child

Get Involved

- Collaboration between family, child, and the team is extremely important for student success.
- Hold higher expectation during post-secondary education meetings to help them become successful in education endeavors.

When to Start Discussing Post-Secondary Options

- Start early on.
- Start exploring career paths as soon as possible.
- If a student is interested in a career path, the IEP team should look at all the options for obtaining the training needed for the career.
- The IEP team should make sure that the guardian takes an active role in transitioning process.

When to begin the Process of Post-Secondary Education

- It is *never* too early to start however the formal timeline begins when the child is a freshman in high school.
- Advocate to meet with the school counselor to set up a four year plan for coursework.

Reference:

<https://tnihealliance.org/>
<https://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/environmental/healthy-places/healthy-places/health-equity/he/accessibility.html#ADA>
[https://www.tn.gov/education/districts/federal-programs-and-oversight/idea.html#:~:text=The%20IDEA%20\(reauthorized%20in%202004,school%2C%20or%20secondary%20school%20educati%20on](https://www.tn.gov/education/districts/federal-programs-and-oversight/idea.html#:~:text=The%20IDEA%20(reauthorized%20in%202004,school%2C%20or%20secondary%20school%20educati%20on)
<https://orangegrovecenter.org/102.13/services-for-children-with-intellectual-and-developmental-di>



Educational Guide, Part 3

Pathway to Post-Secondary Education for Student with Intellectual Disability

Comprehensive Transition Program (CTP)

- Students are eligible to apply for financial aid.
- This program usually requires students to take academic classes, life skill classes, internships, and participate in extracurricular activities on campus.
- Students are often paired with a peer support network within the campus.
- CTP is designed to support students with intellectual disorders in academic, career, and independent living.
- Factors considered for CTPs
 - Age (18-29 years old).
 - Earned one of the four high school diplomas.
 - Health insurance.
 - Access to transportation to and from campus.
- Skills needed to attend CTPs
 - Ability to use different electronic devices.
 - Ability to sit independently through class periods for approximately 2 hours.
 - Emotional stability and independence.
 - Ability to follow rules.

Public Higher Education

- **IDEAL at Lipscomb University**
 - 2-year certification program designed specifically for students with intellectual disabilities to help them prepare for their future.
 - The program includes academic coursework, support for internship, employment skills training, nutrition and exercise classes, and on-campus social activities.
- **TigerLIFE at The University of Memphis**
 - 2-year certification program for students with intellectual disabilities to help them find meaningful and lasting employment.
 - Provides individualized programs for students in education, social skills, and vocational training.
- **Next Steps at Vanderbilt**
 - 4-year inclusive higher education program for students with intellectual disabilities.
 - Provides post-secondary education that helps students with ID in academic, social, and career development and independent living.
- **ETSU East Tennessee State University**
 - The program is for students with an intellectual disability who wants to promote and enhance their academic, career, and social skills among their peers.
 - 2-year inclusive higher education program for students with intellectual disabilities.

Tennessee College Of Applied Technology (TCAT)

- A college program that provides access and accommodations for all qualified students with disability.
- Students should be the ones to initiate the process of reasonable accommodations.

Orange Grove

- The center serves students between the ages of 5 and 22, typically referred by the IEP teams within Tennessee and Georgia counties.
- It offers a range of services, including art, music, and physical recreation, enabling students to explore creative outlets, express themselves, and discover their individuality. Additionally, students may receive additional services such as occupational, speech, or physical therapy, assistive technology, and behavioral support based on their individual needs (Orange Grove Center, 2020).
- The staff and Orange Grove team align their efforts with the Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals to prepare students for increased independence in their daily lives and future work opportunities. These goals encompass a range of areas, including pre-vocational and vocational skills, language development, social skills, self-help skills, functional academics, and community exploration. By incorporating these diverse goals, the team aims to support students in acquiring the necessary skills to thrive in various aspects of life (Orange Grove Center, 2020).

<https://tnihealliance.org/>

<https://orangegrovecenter.org/102.13/services-for-children-with-intellectual-and-developmental-di>

Reference: