



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Bureau of Special Education Communication

DATE: May 19, 2016
FROM: Dr. Isabelina Rodriguez, Chief, Bureau of Special Education
FILE #: SDE05101601
SUBJECT: Informing Parents/Families about Secondary Transition

The State Board of Education approved the *Transition Bill of Rights for Parents of Students Receiving Special Education Services* at the May 4, 2016, meeting. The *Transition Bill of Rights* and the Commissioner's memo to superintendents are attached. This Advisory provides district personnel, specifically Directors of Special Education and PPT Chairpersons, with the information necessary to inform parents, guardians, surrogate parents, and students about secondary transition in accordance with the revised Connecticut General Statutes that went into effect on July 1, 2015.

The intent of the revised General Statutes (Section 10-76d (1-3)) is to provide parents, guardians, surrogate parents of students receiving special education services in grades 6-12, and students, age 18 and older, with information and resources annually at a PPT meeting regarding secondary transition. **The LEA will document that this information has been provided using the two check boxes on the bottom of page 10 of the IEP** (per December 15, 2015, email regarding changes in pages 9 & 10 of the IEP) as follows:

Information on IEPs and Secondary Transition –

1. Immediately upon the formal identification of any child as a child requiring special education and at each PPT meeting thereafter, the LEA **shall inform the parent, guardian or surrogate parent or, student if 18 or older of:**
 - o The laws relating to special education,
 - o The rights of such parent, guardian, surrogate parent or student under such laws, and
 - o Any relevant information and resources relating to IEPs created by the CSDE, including, but not limited to, **information relating to secondary transition resources and services for high school students.**

This statute requires districts to provide information about the location of CSDE publications and resources regarding IEPs, PPT meetings and secondary transition. LEAs may provide information electronically if agreed to by the parent, guardian, surrogate parent or student (18 or older) or may be required to provide a hard copy printed off the CSDE web site. Statutes require that the LEA must mail this information to the parent, guardian, surrogate parent and/or student if they do not attend the PPT.

2. **For the school year commencing July 1, 2015, and each school year thereafter,** the CSDE shall annually distribute to LEAs the *Transition Bill of Rights for Parents of Students Receiving Special Education Services* which shall be provided to the parent

guardian or surrogate parent of a child receiving special education services in grades 6-12, inclusive, or to a student who is 18 or older. The purpose of the *Transition Bill of Rights* is **to ensure that the PPT discusses transition services to assist the family in preparing a student with a disability to transition to adult life.** If the parent, guardian, surrogate parent or pupil does not attend a PPT meeting, the LEA shall mail the *Transition Bill of Rights*.

****For the 2015-16 school year,** the *Transition Bill of Rights* should be disseminated at a PPT meeting. If there will not be a PPT for a student, who is in grade 6-12 inclusive by June 30, 2016, the *Transition Bill of Rights* must be mailed to the parent, guardian, surrogate parent or student if 18 or older.

In order to facilitate meaningful discussions in grades 6-12 regarding secondary transition, it is imperative that LEA staff, and in particular PPT Chairpersons, have the knowledge and information about secondary transition and how to help families prepare students for life after high school – particularly in earlier grades. Please consider using the following ideas and resources to assist your staff and families with this process:

- ❖ **Second Annual Summer Symposium on Secondary Transition** – June 22 & 23, 2016, in West Hartford. For registration and more information see: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/5YZPFNZ>
- ❖ **CSDE Secondary Transition Contact Person Dissemination List** – To ensure that staff receive timely information regarding secondary transition professional learning opportunities and resources, send their name, title, email/phone, and work address to: patricia.anderson@ct.gov
- ❖ **CSDE [Secondary Transition](#) Website Resources** – *CORE Transition Skills, Building a Bridge: A Transition Manual for Students, Stepping Forward: A Self-Advocacy Manual for Middle and High School Students.*
- ❖ **Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center** – [Transition to Adult Life](#) or call: 800-445-2722.
- ❖ **State Education Resource Center** – [Transition Initiative](#) or contact: Missy Wrigley at wrigley@ctserc.org or call 860-632-1485, x397.
- ❖ **Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)** – [Level Up Services](#) - providing students with the tools, training and resources to work competitively and forge a path to independence, including pre-employment transition services during the school year and in the summer for students ages 16-21.

Other information and ideas – especially for younger students (not yet 16-21):

- ★ Many students with disabilities are unaware of their full potential. It is important to expose students early to resources and information that help them develop the independence, responsibility, decision-making and self-advocacy skills that they will need during any transition process, but especially for after high school.
- ★ Exposure to the world of work can be important because students often lack information on the variety of jobs that are available to them and job technical and educational requirements. Relevant activities include: paid and unpaid internships, guest lecturers from the business community, career days, disability mentoring day, informational interviews, youth apprenticeships, and job shadowing. Students report that one-on-one contacts with employers' onsite are more helpful than group worksite tours or school-based activities.
- ★ Help younger students to understand what “work” is. Why do people work? What do people do for work? Identify interest areas – inside/outside; people/animals/things; and working alone or with others. Identify interests and preferences as well as strengths and areas of need.
- ★ Help students to develop interpersonal, communication, social, and transportation skills early that will transfer to employment and learning situations after high school.

If you have any additional questions regarding this issue, please do not hesitate to contact either Dr. Isabelina Rodriguez at (860) 713-6912 or Dr. Patricia Anderson at patricia.anderson@ct.gov or (860) 713-6923.