



A Family Guide to Transition Services in New Jersey

Transition from School to Adult Life
Jordan's World: Using AT to Support Life After High School; Jordan Pratt, Nicole Pratt, Adam Krass

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Workshop Overview

As a result of this workshop you will:

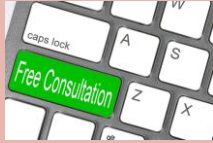
- Have a understanding of the Transition from School to Adult Life process and how Assistive Technology plays a role.
- Learn ways to develop self advocacy and self-determination skills
- Understand how to find information within the *Family Guide to Transition Services*.

Adam Krass Consulting, LLC



- Assistive Technology Services for Children and Adults
 - Evaluations
 - Training for Students, Staff, Families
 - On-Going Support
 - Webinars and Workshops
 - Modifications/Customization
- Serving Northern & Central NJ and NYC (in-person) and Anywhere Else (remotely)

Adam Krass Consulting, LLC



- I am offering free 30-minute AT consultations/sessions for any individual with a disability (children and adults).
- Please email me at adam@adamkrassconsulting.com or call me at 201-618-2315 to schedule a session.

Jordan's World:

Using AT to Support Life After High School

- AT Has Two Parts: It's Important to Get Both
 1. Devices (The Things, Devices, Software, or Apps)
 2. Services

- Evaluations
- Training (student, family, staff)
- Support
- Setup
- Purchase
- Modification
- Customization



- *Remember: Having technology without training often leads to "device abandonment."*

Jordan's World:

Using AT to Support Life After High School

AT in the IEP: Assistive Technology Device

- Assistive technology device means any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability. The term does not include a medical device that is surgically implanted, or the replacement of such device.



- IDEA, Sec. 300.5 Assistive technology device.



**Jordan's World:
Using AT to Support Life After High School**

AT in the IEP: Assistive Technology Services

Any service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device. The term includes-

- (a) The evaluation of the needs of a child with a disability, including a functional evaluation of the child in the child's customary environment;
- (b) Purchasing, leasing, or otherwise providing for the acquisition of assistive technology devices by children with disabilities;
- (c) Selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing, or replacing assistive technology devices;
- (d) Coordinating and using other therapies, interventions, or services with assistive technology devices, such as those associated with existing education and rehabilitation plans and programs;
- (e) Training or technical assistance for a child with a disability or, if appropriate, that child's family; and
- (f) Training or technical assistance for professionals (including individuals providing education or rehabilitation services), employers, or other individuals who provide services to, employ, or are otherwise substantially involved in the major life functions of that child.

**Jordan's World:
Using AT to Support Life After High School**

AT Is Important Because

- **AT supports the Least Restrictive Environment for learning**
- **AT supports greater participation with peers**
- **AT helps students access the general education curriculum**
- **AT supports greater independence**
- **AT helps students learn, and reach their educational goals**



**Jordan's World:
Using AT to Support Life After High School**

The Process of Matching AT To A Student (IEP Team)

1. Identify Goals of Student
2. Review student information
3. Complete SETT Worksheet
4. Discuss WATI AT Continuum
5. Complete and Follow the AT Consideration Form
6. If needed, conduct an AT evaluation





Transition from School to Adult Life

Prior to Transition (Birth–12 years old)

- Envision your child in the future as an adult.
- Have conversations with your child about what they want for themselves.
- Consider what skills your child needs to develop to become more independent.
- Give your child responsibilities/chores as often as possible at home – create opportunities for success.



Transition Timeline

Page 20 & 21

Ages 13-14

Help your youth:

- be able to explain their disability
- learn/practice informed decision making skills
- learn to effectively communicate their interests, preferences, and needs.
- identify personal learning style
- request necessary accommodations in school and the workplace
- learn and practice personal health care
- consider options for future living arrangements including supports.



Transition Timeline

Page 20 & 21



HELPFUL HINTS

- Don't panic
- Start planning early
- Keep a paperwork binder
- Include your youth/young adult
- Have high expectations

REMEMBER:

Strong self advocacy skills lead to improved outcomes!

For more information contact us at:

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thank you

for joining us for this presentation



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Thank You!

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AT & IDEA

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) defines AT as both a device and a service:

Assistive Technology Device

Any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of a child with a disability.

Assistive Technology Service

Any service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device.

What does this mean for students & schools?

School districts are required under law to provide appropriate AT to students with disabilities when it supports their acquisition of a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). In order to support the inclusion and participation of students with disabilities in regular education classrooms, all IEP's developed for children identified as needing special education services, must indicate that AT has been considered to "to provide meaningful access to the general curriculum" (IDEA, 1997). More specifically, IDEA indicates that AT devices and services must be made available to a child with a disability if required as a part of the child's-

- Special education;
- Related services; or
- Supplementary aids and services.

There have been several clarifications from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) on the use of AT by students with disabilities. These include:

- AT must be provided by the school district at no cost to the family.
- AT must be determined on a case-by-case basis; it is required if needed to ensure access to free and appropriate public education (FAPE).
- If the IEP team determines that AT is needed for home use to ensure FAPE, it must be provided
- The student's IEP must reflect the nature of the AT and amount of supportive AT services required.
- A parent is accorded an extensive set of procedural safeguards, including the provision of AT to the child.

Keep in mind that AT is any item that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of a child with a disability. For some students with disabilities, AT may be the *only way* that access to the general curriculum can be ensured!

Did You Know?

Assistive Technology (AT) Can Play an Important Role in Meeting the Needs of Students with Disabilities in School

AT offers children with disabilities the ability to meet their full potential. Specialized computer keyboards, screen magnification systems and specially-designed software offer children with physical, visual or cognitive impairments the adaptations they need to allow them to benefit from 21st century technology that some take for granted. Similarly, items like speech generating devices and FM systems offer students with speech or hearing impairments the ability to fully participate in the educational experience. Other AT devices, and the training needed to understand their use, will help prepare students as they transition from special education programs to adult activities. This article will look at the historical development of the use of AT in schools. Future articles will explore the details involved with obtaining AT for students.

Interest in AT grew with the passage of the Technology-Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Act of 1988 (Tech Act). P.L. 100-407, former 29 USC 2201 et seq. The Tech Act defined both AT “devices” and “services.” Congress re-authorized this legislation as the AT Act of 1998. 29 USC 3001 et seq.

The term AT device “means any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.” *Id.* 3002(2).

The term AT service “means any service that directly assists an individual with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device.” It includes:

- (A) evaluations, including functional evaluations of individuals in their customary environment;
- (B) purchasing, leasing, or otherwise acquiring AT devices;
- (C) selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, maintaining, repairing, or replacing AT devices;
- (D) coordinating and using other services with AT devices;
- (E) training for the individual, or, where appropriate, the family; and
- (F) training for those providing services to the individual. 29 USC 3002(3).

The legislative history to the Tech Act indicates the broad range of AT devices that were contemplated:

The Committee includes this broad definition to provide maximum flexibility to enable States to address the varying needs of individuals of all ages with all categories of disabilities and to make it clear that simple adaptations to equipment are included under the definition as are low and high technology items and *software*. Senate Report No. 100-438, 1988 U.S. Code Cong. & Admin. News, p. 1405 (emphasis added).

Definitions of AT devices and services were added to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1990. Legislative history underscored the role of AT in educating students with disabilities. Congress noted that advances in AT have provided new opportunities for students with disabilities to participate in educational programs. For many, the provision of AT “will redefine an ‘appropriate placement in the least restrictive environment’ and allow greater independence and productivity.” House Report No. 101-544, 1990 U.S. Code Cong. & Admin. News, p. 1730. AT was added in order:

(1) to clarify the broad range of assistive technology devices and related services that are available, and (2) to increase the awareness of assistive technology as an *important component* of meeting the special education and related service needs of many students with disabilities, and thus enable them to participate in, and benefit from, educational programs. *Id.*, p. 1731 (*emphasis added*).

In 1997 IDEA amendments, Congress again emphasized AT. The need for AT must now be considered for all students when developing the IEP. 20 USC 1414(d)(3)(B)(v) (*emphasis added*); 34 CFR 300.324(a)(2)(v). The comments to the 1999 regulations make it clear that it is “mandatory for the IEP team to consider each child’s AT needs.” 64 Fed. Reg. 12590-91.

The comments to the 1999 regulations also make it clear that AT encompasses the individual student’s own personal needs for AT, such as “electronic notetakers, cassette recorders, etc.,” as well as access to AT devices used by all students. If a student needs accommodations to use an AT device used by all students, the school “must ensure that the necessary accommodation is provided.” 64 Fed. Reg. 12540.

Once again, in 2004 IDEA amendments, Congress emphasized AT. It noted that AT devices and services continue to play a very important role in the education of students with disabilities. In fact, the preamble to IDEA ‘04 notes that “almost 30 years of research and experience has demonstrated that the education of children with disabilities can be made more effective by ... supporting the development and use of technology, including [AT] devices and [AT] services, to maximize accessibility for children with disabilities.” 20 USC 1400(c)(5)(H) (*emphasis added*).

As you review the more detailed provisions of the IDEA concerning AT, and as you advocate for obtaining AT, keep these more general principles in mind.

Those reading this as email should use “reply all” to share comments or questions that they want to reach all participants on the list serve. Use “reply” to communicate only with the person who did the posting (or just contact the author below).

Posted by: Ronald M. Hager, Senior Attorney
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Statewide Parent
Advocacy Network

Empowering families,
professionals, and others
interested in the well-being
and education of children
and youth

In this fact sheet:

- *What are Transition Services?*
- *Where are transition services provided?*
- *How does transition affect the IEP?*
- *What are the graduation requirements for a student with disabilities?*
- *What should be considered before accepting a diploma?*

{ and more }

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One of the major purposes of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is to ensure that all students with disabilities are prepared for further education, employment, and independent living.

TRANSITION TO ADULT LIFE

TRANSITION is the formal process of long-range cooperative planning that will assist students with disabilities to successfully move from school into the adult world.

What are Transition Services?

“Transition services” are a coordinated set of activities 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-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, and community participation.

Services must be based on the child’s need, taking into account his/her strengths, preferences and interest.

Transition services include instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and a functional vocational evaluation.

Where are transition services provided?

Transition services must be provided in the “least restrictive environment” (LRE). LRE is likely to be the “real world” – the community in which the student will live and work after high school graduation. A student’s transition goals may include learning to ride a bus, learning to shop for groceries, learning to access community-based recreational activities and learning how to apply for a job.

The IEP team must consider and provide any supplementary aids and services needed to allow the student to participate in services and programs with those who do not have disabilities.

When does transition planning begin?

In New Jersey, transition planning begins in the school year in which a student will be 14. At that time, the IEP must include a statement of the graduation requirements that the student is expected to meet. In addition, it must include a statement of the students’ strengths, interests and preferences, along with a course of study and related strategies and activities designed to help students develop or attain post-secondary goals.

How does transition affect the IEP?

An IEP meeting in which transition is discussed should begin with the student’s vision for his/her future and include considerations such as where he/she wants to live; what kind of work he/she wants to do; and whether he/she plans to go to college. *(continued on page 2)*



The IEP for the school year in which the student turns 16 must include measurable postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments; and appropriate transition services. Postsecondary goals need to be measurable, and include education after high school, employment, community participation, and independent living.

What is the role of outside agencies in the transition planning process?

The IEP team must consider the need for consultation from other agencies such as the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI), Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS), and the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD).

What are the graduation requirements for a student with disabilities?

Graduation requirements are determined individually. The IEP must include a statement of the State and local graduation requirements that the student is expected to meet. If the student is exempted from these, or if there is a modification to the requirements, the IEP must include a rationale for the exemption or modification, as well as a description of the alternate proficiencies to be achieved in order to qualify for a diploma. Graduation with a state endorsed diploma requires prior written notice. When a student graduates or ages out of school, the student must be provided with a written Summary of Performance. It is important to be aware that the graduation is the only change in placement that does not require evaluation. In addition to earning required credits, the student must also meet transition-related IEP goals and objectives before earning a diploma.

What should be considered before accepting a diploma?

All students with disabilities are eligible for special education services through the end of the school year in which they turn 21. The decision about when to accept a diploma is based on the IEP and should not be taken lightly: once a student accepts a diploma, the right to special education and related services ends.

For students likely to need day services or job supports from the Division of Developmental Disabilities, it is important to know that services will not be initiated until the individual is 21.

What are the rules regarding diplomas and participation in graduation ceremonies?

A student with a disability can participate in senior prom, senior class trips and graduation ceremonies with peers, **without** accepting a diploma. The student can receive a diploma after satisfying the goals, objectives and graduation requirements outlined in the IEP, or by June 30th in the school year in which he or she turns 21, whichever comes first.

The Role of the Student

Regardless of the student's disability, he/she must be invited to any meeting in which transition will be discussed. Although the student may choose not to attend, he/she should be encouraged and supported to actively develop self-advocacy skills. Creating opportunities for choices and preferences at an early age encourages decision-making skills. Early participation in the IEP process prepares students for their expected participation at age 18 when they will be making their own IEP decisions.

Adult rights transfer to students at age 18, so students become the decision makers, regardless of ability. Parents who believe their child will need assistance should consider supported decision making & alternatives to guardianship before the student turns 18.

Learn more:

Federal regulations governing Transition can be found at 34 CFR 300.34.

New Jersey State regulations governing Transition can be found at NJAC 6A:14-3.7.

Go online for answers to these questions:

What are some transition considerations for students going to college?

What is the role of DDD and DVRS?

What is Supported Decision-Making?

What is the role of SSI?

What is the role of DCF? DMS?

What is Alicia's Law?

What is in the Written Summary of Performance?

What does it mean that New Jersey is an "Employment First" state?



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Graduation Tip Sheet

High School Graduation Considerations for Students with Disabilities

Graduation from high school is an exciting time, which marks the beginning of a new journey in a young person's life. It is important that students know their special education rights as they transition to adult life. This Graduation Tip Sheet highlights important information for the consideration of students and their families.

#1 Tip: The NJ Department of Education and/or local school district graduation requirements for classroom credit is NOT the sole criteria for students with disabilities to obtain their high school diploma. **The IEP must contain a **transition plan** to adult life, along with transition goals and a summary of performance prior to students receiving their high school diploma.*

Here is how the NJ law defines "Transition Services"

New Jersey Administrative Code Title 6A Chapter 14 Special Education Transition Requirements
APPENDIX D 20 U.S.C. §1401(34) (34)

Transition services- The term "**transition services**" means a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability 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 postschool 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-school adult living objectives, and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

Summary of Relevant New Jersey Special Education components:

- Students are eligible for special education and related services from age **3 through 21**. **NJAC 6A:14-1.3** Defines student age, as the attainment of 21st birthday by June 30 of that school year.
 - **Graduation** (6A:14-4.11) is a **change of placement that requires written notice** according to N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.3(f) and (g) and that is subject to all procedural safeguards, including mediation, due process and emergent relief if pertaining to graduation ceremonies. *See **PRISE** (Parental rights in special education) <https://www.nj.gov/education/specialed/form/prise/>
 - **Reevaluation** is not required for graduation. **NJAC 6A:14.11(b)**
 - **Summary of Performance** is required and is written summary of the student's academic achievement and functional performance is required and includes recommendations to assist the student their postsecondary goals. **NJAC 6A:14.11(b)**
 - Students in an **Out of District placement** may choose to receive the diploma from either the school attended or the school district of residence per **NJAC 6A:14.11(c)**.
-

- **Alicia’s Law:** Students who are receiving services beyond 12th grade have a right to equitable participation in graduation activities, including the commencement ceremony and senior class related events: http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2008/Bills/AL08/19_.HTM
- **Requirement of facilitation to Adult Agencies:** IDEA and NJAC 6:A chapter 14 require consultation and linkage to appropriate adult systems of care as part of the transition plan on the IEP. Agencies such as the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI), Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS), Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DDHH), and New Jersey Consortium on Deaf Blindness (NJCDB) are those typically involved with the transition. **Please note that students may apply to DDD at age 18, however DDD funding does not begin until age 21.*
- **Adult students:** While all special education rights transfer to adult students who have reached the age of 18, an adult student that has reached the age of majority may request their parent or any specified adult, be included in their special education and decision making process by putting their request in writing to the Child Study Team Case Manager. See SPAN Adult Student Consent Sample Letter. <https://spanadvocacy.org/covid-19-resource-page/>
- **The NJ Office of Special Education has issued guidance for students on a path to graduate in 2020 and who may missed services critical to achieving their transition goals due to school shutdowns and “stay at home” orders resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic.** https://spanadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/COVID_Providing-Additional-Services-for-Students-with-Disabilities-Who-Will-Graduate-or-Exceed-Eligibility-for-Special-Education-Services.pdf

SPAN has an example letter to address compensatory education for missed services for transition age students and those scheduled to graduate June 2020: <https://spanadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Sample-Letter-Comp-Svs-Transition.pdf>

Conflict Resolution in Special Education:

If attempts to reach agreement have failed, there is always the option of exercising your rights to seek dispute resolution via **Complaint Investigation, Mediation, Due Process,** and/or **Emergent Relief,** if applicable. For detailed information, instructions and forms, see NJ Office of Special Education’s website: <https://www.state.nj.us/education/specialed/due/>

Additional resources on Transition and Special Education Rights:

NJ Administrative Code Special Education code:

<https://www.state.nj.us/education/code/current/title6a/chap14.pdf>

Transition requirements and resources may be found on the **N.J. Department of Education Office of Special Education website:** <https://www.nj.gov/education/specialed/transition/> and summary of regulations <http://www.state.nj.us/education/specialed/transition/regs.pdf>

The SPAN website www.spanadvocacy.org has a wealth of information and resources including the following transition to adult life projects:

Youth in the Know: <https://spanadvocacy.org/programs/youth-in-the-know/>

REACH for Transition : <https://spanadvocacy.org/programs/reach/>

RAISE: <https://www.raisecenter.org/>