# Inclusive Practices for Students Ages 14 to 21: Considerations and Concepts

All students ages 14 to 21 who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) are required to be involved in a transition process in school. It is important that IEP teams are aware of the benefits of inclusive environments for secondary students that include:

- Learning in environments that match the expectations of the adult world
- Opportunities to learn and work alongside individuals without disabilities
- Access to highly qualified instructors and standards-aligned instruction
- Developing an understanding of the demands and opportunities of postsecondary education and employment settings
- Feedback to the team to support the development, prioritization and implementation of effective transition planning
- Opportunities for teaching and practicing self-advocacy and self-determination skills
- Incorporating assistive technology in academic and workplace settings
- Coordinated services among students, parents, business, agency and community representatives

There are a variety of potential instructional environments for high school students. IEP teams should consider opportunities for participation in the following inclusive settings:

- General education classes
- Extracurricular and nonacademic activities
- Community settings
- Career and Technical Education
- Job Training sites

When IEP teams identify activities and services for transition planning, they should evaluate the quality of inclusive opportunities. In order to achieve this outcome, the team should consider the following:

- Are there both individuals with and without disabilities participating in natural proportions? This does not refer to a situation where a "group" or a "class" of students with disabilities is placed together to participate with nondisabled peers. A good rule of thumb is that 10 percent or fewer of the students in an activity should be identified as having a disability.
- Is it an environment where a 14 to 21 year old peer without a disability would spend time?
- Are there specific, prioritized educational goals to be addressed?

In developing transition activities to enable students to reach their postsecondary goals, the following are considerations to meaningfully engage students in inclusive environments. Has the IEP team considered:

- Environment? – locations in school and community settings where instruction may occur
- Activities? – targeted activity within the environment for student participation and instruction
- Outcomes? – purpose of the student participating in the activity
- Supports? – planned supports to address potential barriers to participation and learning in the environment

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The chart below contains examples of an inclusive framework for transition planning.

| | Environment | Activities | Outcomes | Supports |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Postsecondary Education and Training** | Community college campus | Summer college prep class | Develop organizational strategies needed for success in a community college course | Use an organizational binder to keep track of notes and assignments. Weekly proactive "check-in" with instructor |
| **Employment** | Community-based business | Data entry | Increase speed and accuracy in work related tasks; extended work hours | Job coach; raised desktop; repositioning of the keyboard and monitor, enabling of "sticky keys "and disabling of the "key repeat" function to enhance accessibility; coordinated scheduling with personal care attendant |
| **Independent Living (Community Living)** | Community public transportation | Taking bus to and from work and school | Getting to work and school safely and on time | Service provider and peer support |
| **Self-Determination** | Biology I | Note-taking | Discuss with teacher need for guided notes; download guided notes from teacher's website once per week to complete during lectures | Role playing discussion ahead of time; putting reminder in calendar to download every Sunday |


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