



# Family Engagement Newsletter

## Transition to Postsecondary Schooling for Students with a Disability

By Wendy Overturf

Many high school students with disabilities plan to continue their education in postsecondary schools, such as vocational and career schools, two- and four- year colleges, and universities. If you are a student with a disability, or a parent of a child with a disability, it is important to understand your rights and responsibilities or your child's rights while making the transition to postsecondary education.

Postsecondary schools are not included under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). There are no IEPs. Postsecondary schools do not have to provide the same level of supports and services a student might have received in high school. These schools are not required to provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). Rather, a postsecondary school is required to provide appropriate academic adjustments as necessary to ensure that it does not discriminate on the basis of disability. They must follow federal civil rights laws which includes Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). These laws have a different goal than IDEA. Their purpose is to ensure equal access for people with disabilities and to protect them against discrimination (Check this [link](#) for a comparison of IDEA, Section 504, and ADA.)

Postsecondary schools that get federal funds must ensure equal access to students with disabilities. That means they have to provide reasonable accommodations. Accommodations are not the same as modifications. In providing an academic adjustment, the postsecondary school is not required to lower or modify essential (necessary) course requirements. For example, although the school may be required to provide extended time for test taking, it is not required to change the content of the test. In addition, the postsecondary school does not have to make adjustments that would fundamentally alter the nature of a service, program, or activity, or that would result in an undue financial or administrative burden. Some typical accommodations that postsecondary schools often provide are: A note-taker for class lectures; Audio recordings of lectures; Permission to use a laptop computer in the classroom; Taking exams in a distraction-reduced room.

Applying for academic accommodations is a separate process from the general college application process. It usually begins after your child has been accepted and has enrolled in the college. To receive accommodations at a postsecondary school, students need to register as a student with a disability through the disability services office at the school. This is not the same as the admissions office. It may be a good idea to contact the disability services office before applying to a school. Some institutions may offer more supports and services than required by law.

When registering as a student with a disability at a postsecondary school, students need to provide documentation of their disability. That is why it is very important that accommodations received in high school are well documented on a 504 plan or IEP. Keep in mind that all accommodations received in high school will not automatically be granted at the postsecondary school. Also, some schools may require more documentation than the student's high school IEP or 504 plan. Any additional evaluations that are required by the school would be at the student's expense and their responsibility to provide to the school.

Once approved, typically a letter explaining the accommodations for a student is sent to the student's professors. Students should plan some time to meet with their professors to discuss the accommodations. [Tips for Communicating with Your Professors About Accommodations](#) offers some excellent suggestions for how a student can approach these meetings.

It is important to remember that the curriculum and course requirements will not be altered. Accommodations are put in place to provide equal access to learning and are not a guarantee of academic success.

If a student has concerns that accommodations are not being appropriately provided, almost every postsecondary school has a person—frequently called the Section 504 Coordinator, ADA Coordinator, or Disability Services Coordinator—who coordinates the school's compliance with Section 504, ADA, or both laws. Students may contact that person for information about how to address their concerns.

The better students understand their disabilities and the more aware they are about themselves as learners, the better prepared they will be to advocate for themselves and request the appropriate accommodations when they enter postsecondary education. More information on postsecondary transition for students with a disability can be found at the U.S. Department of Education [website](#) or [NSCET website](#).

## Statewide Events

### First Nations Studies 2021-2022 Webinar Lecture Series:

#### [Indigenizing Learning Spaces for All](#)

The training will examine how history, culture, and language can impact achievement, school climate, and student, family, and community engagement.

**Dates:** January 5&6, 2022, 3:30-6:30pm

### Supporting Neurodiverse Students

Trainings to support educators and families serving students with disability-related needs in the area of social and emotional learning (SEL). The SNS System provides learning opportunities focusing on self-regulation, social communication, flexibility, resilience, sensory processing, and executive functioning. These are no-cost virtual events.

#### [Body Processing](#)

A four-session cohort designed to support educators serving students with disability-related needs in the areas of sensory and self-regulation. Sessions are from 3:30pm-4:30 pm.

**Dates:** 1/11/22, 1/18/22, 1/25/22, 2/1/22

#### [Social-Emotional Behavior through the Lens of Language](#)

**Date:** January 13, 2022, 9am-11am

#### [Training for Home Language Interpreters: Supporting Families Through the Special Education Process](#)

Wisconsin DPI has partnered with WI FACETS, LEAs, and other organizations to develop a one-day training for home language interpreters who interpret for families at IEP meetings. The training provides **increased awareness** of state and federal laws, regulations and policies related to the educational rights of students who receive special education through an IEP and who may also be English Language Learners. **increased knowledge** of legal responsibilities and requirements related to translation and interpretation of special education, terms, concepts, tools and resources for interpreters and **improved skills** to handle common ethical considerations while interpreting IEP meetings.

\*One-day virtual trainings offered in 2022: January 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>

#### [Save the Date: State Superintendent's Conference on Special Education and Pupil Services Leadership Conference](#)

Live and pre-recorded sessions on state and national legal updates.

**Date:** Thursday, February 10, 2022



## At Home Learning Strategies

### [DayByDay Family Literacy Calendar](#)

This calendar features songs, activities, book suggestions, and videos that support early literacy skills and helps young children get ready for school.



### [Children's Activity Calendar: January 2022](#)

(Be sure to click link to download to be able to use included links on calendar)

Try exciting new activities like organizing a rock-paper-scissors tournament, experimenting with static electricity, creating frozen bubbles, and learning STEM skills with LEGO challenges.

### [Activities for New Year's Goals](#)

The New Year is a great time to reflect on the past year. You can help your child think about what kind of new year they would like. Sometimes the hardest part of setting a goal is creating the goal in the first place. There is a saying "that if you don't have a map, how will you know where to go?" That is why writing down and reflecting on New Year's goals and resolutions is such a great idea. This [link](#) provides a printable to assist you and your child in writing a goal. Parents could model the activity by writing a goal for themselves as well.

If you want to get a bit more involved with goals, you can help your child create a vision board. A vision board - also called a dream board - is a collection of pictures that shows goals and dreams for the future. A vision board is a great way to motivate kids and help them pursue their dreams and goals.

To make the vision board:

- Ask your child about their goals and dreams and help to write them down.
- Find and cut images from magazines or printouts from the internet that match these goals.
- Glue these pictures to the construction paper and include a few key words about what the picture represents. This board can help provide motivation throughout the coming year.

### [Martin Luther King Jr. Day - January 17, 2022](#)

Here are [four videos](#) to help kids understand the importance of Dr. King's dream and his legacy.



#### [Snow Paint](#)

Even though it may be cold outside, kids often love bundling up and playing in the snow. Add some fun to this by making some snow paint. Making your own snow paint only requires 2 ingredients – water and food coloring. It is easy to whip together, and the kids will love to help too. Your children can make designs in the snow or perhaps practice writing their names.

### [Fun Food Preparation Activities](#)

Including children in food preparation can have all kinds of benefits, such as encouraging them to explore and maybe even try out new foods, flavors, and even textures. Following recipes is a great way to sneak in some reading and math skills. Here are some winter-themed recipes to try!



[Polar Bear Hot Chocolate](#)   [Popcorn Snowballs](#)  
[Cinnamon Sugar Snowflakes](#)  
[Penguin Frozen Banana Snack](#)



### [Snuggle Up with a Winter-Themed Book](#)

There is nothing like a good book, whether you read a book as a family, or everyone reads their own individual book. If you want a few great suggestions, you can find plenty in these booklists. Be sure to check with your local library to see if some of these are available there.



[100 Picture Books to Read this Winter](#)  
[Winter-Themed Chapter Books for Kids](#)  
[Winter Reads for Middle School Students](#)

Here are a few video read-a-louds to get you started:

[The Snowy Day](#)   [One Winter's Day](#)   [Winter Is Here](#)

## Online Resources: Transition



### [Center for Parent Information and Resources \(CPIR\)](#)

This website has many links to articles and information on transition that are specifically designed for both parents and students.

### [Transition Improvement Grant \(TIG\)](#)

TIG is designed to strengthen and accelerate the transition process in our Wisconsin schools to increase high school graduation rates, decrease dropout rates, improve the quality of postsecondary transition plans (PTP), and develop strong career, college, and community readiness among our students with disabilities through positive post school outcomes. The TIG has developed several tools which incorporate reviewing data, strategic planning and implementation of transition practices to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

### [Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction](#)

This website has a variety of resources related to transition, including information about outside agencies. It also includes a link to [College, Career, and Community Readiness for Students with IEPs](#) to support students at all age and developmental levels to be independent and college, career, and community ready.

### [Division of Vocational Rehabilitation \(DVR\)](#)

A federal/state program designed to obtain, maintain, and advance employment for people with disabilities by working with DVR consumers, employers, and other partners.

### [Opening Doors to Self-Determination Skills \(English\) \(Spanish\)](#)

Setting and achieving goals helps students grow. Knowing their strengths and addressing their weaknesses is important as students prepare for life after high school. As students move through school and toward adulthood, they go through a process of considering who they are and who they wish to become. What kind of work would they like to do? What will they need to do to pursue this work? What living arrangements do they envision? What education, training, and services will be available to them along the way? Students can work with counselors, parents, and teachers as they work with this resource.

### [How to Use the WiTransition App & Your Postsecondary Transition Plan \(PTP\)](#)

This is a link to how parents and students can access questions that are on the Postsecondary Transition Plan (PTP). A PTP is required in Wisconsin for all IEPs if the student will be turning 14 during the duration of the IEP. It is then included in all subsequent years. Parents and students can also access a [“demo” PTP planning page](#) to be used before the IEP meeting.

### [Transition of Students with Disabilities to Postsecondary Education:](#)

#### [A Guide for High School Educators](#)

This guide is published by the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. The purpose of this guide is to provide high school educators with answers to questions students with disabilities and their families may have as they get ready to move to the postsecondary education environment.

### [Transition Planning for Students with IEPs](#)

Learn how this part of the IEP allows teens in special education to outline goals that will help them achieve their post-high school plans.

### [National Parent Center on Transition and Employment](#)

This website has a multitude of links related to transition planning and work-based learning for students with disabilities.

### [Transition Guide to Postsecondary Education & Employment for Students and Youth with Disabilities](#)

This guide is published by The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. The guide addresses transition planning, services and requirements, as authorized by IDEA and the Rehabilitation Act; education and employment options for students after high school; and supported decision-making.

### [National Center for Secondary Education and Transition \(NCSET\)](#)

NCSET coordinates national resources, offers technical assistance, and disseminates information related to secondary education and transition for youth with disabilities in order to create opportunities for youth to achieve successful futures



### **Up to Me: Starting the Conversation** *Webinar Series for Parents and Caregivers*

People with mental health challenges and those that support them face decisions everyday about if and what to say to friends, family, co-workers, and others about their experiences. Whether their loved one is returning from treatment, exhibited some mental health symptoms, or is asked about a behavior that someone has noticed, knowing how to decide if and what they want to say can be key to moving forward with their recovery. If they choose to disclose, having an answer that points to their or their loved one's strength and resilience is empowering. Knowing when and how to disclose information about yourself is challenging enough, knowing how to do this as a parent or caregiver of a loved one with a mental health challenge can be particularly challenging.

The “Up to Me”: Starting the Conversation series will be presented by Emily Jonesberg and Sharon Dossett with Rogers InHealth.

#### **Register for the Series:**

#### [Starting the Conversation - Series Overview](#)

January 10, 2022, 12—1 pm

#### [Defining Stigma](#)

February 14, 2022, 12-12:30 pm

#### [Self-Stigma and Its Impact on You](#)

March 14, 2022, 12-12:30 pm

#### [Different Types of Disclosure](#)

April 11, 2022, 12-12:30 pm

#### [How to Disclose](#)

May 9, 2022, 12-12:30

#### [Applying This Information to Your Child's Story](#)

June 13, 2022, 12-12:30 pm





**Event title links to information & registration for WI FACETS FREE workshops & webinars:**

To register by phone: 877-374-0511  
**All webinars 12:00—1:00 PM (unless otherwise noted)**

[Navigating the Juvenile Justice System with Mental Health Challenges](#)

**Presenter:** Anna Moffit, NAMI  
**Date:** January 5, 2022

[Up to Me for Parents - Series Overview](#)

**Presenter:** Emily Jonesberg, Rogers InHealth  
**Date:** January 10, 2022

[“Learn the Signs. Act Early!” Toolkit](#)

**Presenter:** Kris Pizur-Barnekow, CDC’s Act Early Ambassador  
**Date:** January 12, 2022

[Orientación y capacitación sobre los mini módulos de IEP](#)

**Date:** January 13, 2022

**Presenter:** Sra. Nelsinia Ramos, de WI FACETS

Si tiene preguntas sobre el taller, o necesita asistencia, llame al 414-374-4645 o por email a nramos@wifacets.org.

[WSEMS: Mediation](#)

**Presenter:** Courtney Salzer, WI FACETS and Nissan Bar-Lev, CESA 7  
**Date:** January 18, 2022

[Section 504 - What Parents and Schools Need to Know](#)

**Presenter:** Matthew Zellmer, WI FACETS  
**Date:** January 24, 2022

[Foster Grandparents Program](#)

**Presenter:** Laura Langer, State Office on Aging  
**Date:** January 26, 2022

[IEP 1: Conceptos básicos de educación especial](#)

**Presenter:** Sra. Nelsinia Ramos, de WI FACETS

**Date:** January 27, 2022

Si tiene preguntas sobre el taller, o necesita asistencia, llame al 414-374-4645 o por email a nramos@wifacets.org.



## Updated Guidance for Disability Employment

The U.S. Department of Education issued an updated [frequently asked questions document](#) that serves as guidance for the vocational rehabilitation program. The new information replaces guidance from 2017, the agency said. Federal law requires that individuals with disabilities receiving services through vocational rehabilitation must be provided the opportunity to obtain competitive integrated employment.

For a job to qualify under that standard, the guidance indicates that an employee with a disability must be paid at least minimum wage and compensated on par with workers without disabilities doing the same jobs. In addition, the position must be one that is “typically found in the community” where employees with disabilities interact with people without disabilities to the same extent as other workers. The job must offer opportunities for advancement much like those available to people without disabilities doing similar jobs.

Vocational rehabilitation agencies should evaluate jobs on a case-by-case basis to assess whether they are “typically found in the community,” the document states. But, in order to satisfy that threshold, a position should be open to anyone who is qualified no matter their disability status.

Similarly, case-specific evaluation should be made to determine if a job offers an appropriate level of interaction with people without disabilities. Telework, freelance and flexible work opportunities may satisfy this requirement since the guidance says that interaction does not have to be face-to-face. Self-employment counts as competitive integrated employment as well, the document indicates.

Group settings like janitorial or landscaping crews may also be considered competitive integrated employment if they meet the requirements outlined. But, positions through the [AbilityOne Program](#) and other situations where individuals with disabilities are hired to “comply with a direct labor-hour ratio of individuals with disabilities required by federal law” likely would not qualify.

People with disabilities do not have to choose competitive integrated employment, the Education Department said, but that is the only route supported by the vocational rehabilitation program. “We emphasize that, while there are a variety of employment types currently available for individuals with disabilities to choose from based on their individual preferences, only ‘competitive integrated employment’ and supported employment are allowable employment outcomes for purposes of the VR program,” the guidance states. If individuals choose to pursue work that does not meet the criteria for competitive integrated employment, vocational rehabilitation agencies should refer them to appropriate community resources, according to the frequently asked questions document.

## Research to Read

### Family Perspectives on a Successful Transition to Adulthood for Individuals with Disabilities

Henninger, N. A., & Taylor, J. L. (2014). Family perspectives on a successful transition to adulthood for individuals with disabilities. *Intellectual and developmental disabilities*, 52(2), 98–111. <https://doi.org/10.1352/1934-9556-52.2.98>

#### Article Link

When researchers evaluate adult outcomes for individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (ID/DD), the perspective of families is not always considered. Parents of individuals with ID/DD (n=198) answered an online survey about their definition of a successful transition to adulthood. Content analysis was used to describe themes and ideas present in responses. Rather than focusing only on developmental tasks of adulthood, such as living independently, being competitively employed, and maintaining friendships, responses reflected a more varied and dynamic view of success in adulthood, taking into account the fit between the person with ID/DD and his or her environment. As services are developed and implemented for adults with ID/DD, it is important to consider the full range of goals families have for their son or daughter’s successful transition to adulthood.

This monthly update is provided by the Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training & Support (WI FACETS) to share statewide information regarding parent leadership and family involvement. *If you would like to receive this monthly update or if you would like to have your name removed from the distribution list, contact: Wendy Overturf at [woverturf@wifacets.org](mailto:woverturf@wifacets.org).*



## Contributions to the Newsletter

**Upcoming newsletter topics:** February: Intellectual Disabilities  
March: Early Childhood  
April: Autism Spectrum Disorders

*To submit contributions of articles, events, or resources, you may use the attached word document. Send submissions to [woverturf@wifacets.org](mailto:woverturf@wifacets.org). If you are unable to access the form, you may send the information in an email.*

*Material appropriate for the monthly newsletter include web links to sources of family involvement/parent leadership resources, advertisements for statewide trainings for parents, youth or parent/educator audiences, information about statewide parent agencies, recent research pertaining to family engagement, and family engagement success articles.*

***The WI FACETS Family Engagement E-Newsletter  
can be found online at:***

**[Newsletter | Serving Groups \(servingongroups.org\)](https://www.servingongroups.org)**



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