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*Love, equity, and access for young people with disabilities*

# Transition and Life After High School

# **include nyc**

## **WHAT WE DO**

- **LEARNING & SCHOOL**
- **FAMILY SUPPORT SYSTEMS**
- **PARENTING & ADVOCACY**
- **WORKING & ADULT LIFE**
- **FRIENDSHIP & SOCIAL SKILLS**

# include nyc is...

a provider of one-on-one support, training, and practical information to young people with disabilities, their families, and the professionals who work with them.

a family-founded, independent nonprofit

a Parent Center serving NYC children and young people with disabilities, birth through 26, and their families

here to help you make informed decisions

# Agenda

- Who I Am & Who You Are
- What Is Transition?
- Part I:
  - Diploma Options
  - Credential Options
- Part II: Transition Planning with Schools
- Part III: Post Secondary Options
  - ACCES-VR
  - OPWDD
  - ILCs
- Questions

# What Is Transition?

In the special education world, the term transition applies to students who are preparing to leave high school and enter a post secondary system, with the goal of successful and meaningful functioning into adult life.

This can mean:

- College
- Job/Vocational training
- Housing/independent living
- Access to health care and additional health services

# When Does Transition Occur?

- Depending on each individual, transition begins approximately at age 12 and continues into a young person's mid to late 20s.
- The earlier you, your young person, and the professionals working with the young person begin working on a transition plan, the smoother the plan.
- This begins with knowing your diploma options and how to work towards graduation.

# Part I: Diploma and Credential Options

# The Right To Stay In School

- Your child has the right to attend school until the end of the school year in which the student turns 21, or until student obtains high school diploma.
  - Your child can stay in school even if student receives credential.
- Compulsory school attendance: until the end of the school year in which the student turns 17.





# Types of Diplomas

- Regents
- Advanced Regents
- Local Diploma
- High School Equivalency (TASC)  
Formerly GED



# Regents Diploma

- 44 credits (in specific subjects)
- Score 65% on 5 Regents Exams (ELA, Math, Science, Global History, US History)
- **Advanced Regents:**
- 44 credits (in specific subjects)
- Score 65% on additional Regents Exams

*(Available to all students)*



# Local Diploma

- 44 credits (in certain subjects)
- **Options for Regents:**
  - Low Pass Option
  - Compensatory Option
  - Portfolio Option

*Only available to students with IEPs  
(and 504 plans)!*

# Local Diploma: Low Pass Option



- 44 credits (in certain subjects)
- **Low Pass Option**
  - Score a 55% on:
    - ELA
    - Math
    - Science
    - Global History
    - U.S. History

# Local Diploma: Compensatory Option



- 44 credits (in specific subjects)
- **Compensatory Option:**
  - Score 55% on ELA and Math regents
  - Scores between 45% and 54% on other three required regents can be compensated with 65% on another required regent. A Score of 65% or higher can not be used to compensate for more than one regent.

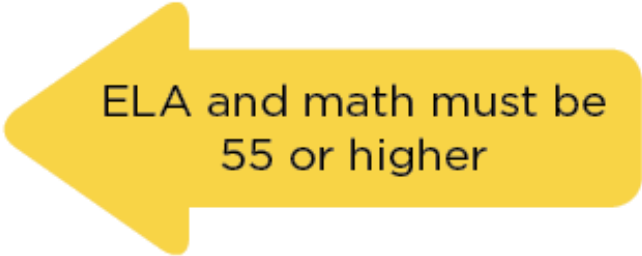
*Only available to students with IEPs  
(and 504 plans)!*

# Sample Regents Score for Compensatory Option

## EXAMPLE 1:

A student has received the following exam scores:

- |                              |           |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| • ELA Regents                | <b>55</b> |
| • Integrated Algebra Regents | <b>55</b> |
| • Global History Regents     | <b>45</b> |
| • U.S. History Regents       | <b>55</b> |
| • Living Environment Regents | <b>65</b> |



ELA and math must be 55 or higher

### **Student qualifies for the local diploma:**

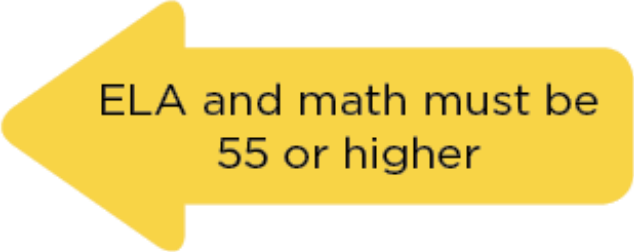
- The 45 in Global History is compensated by the 65 in Living Environment.
- All other exams have scores of 55 or higher.

# Sample Regents Score for Compensatory Option

## EXAMPLE 2:

A student has received the following exam scores:

- |                              |           |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| • ELA Regents                | <b>55</b> |
| • Integrated Algebra Regents | <b>70</b> |
| • Global History Regents     | <b>45</b> |
| • U.S. History Regents       | <b>52</b> |
| • Living Environment Regents | <b>65</b> |



ELA and math must be 55 or higher

### **Student qualifies for the local diploma:**

- The 45 in Global History is compensated by the 65 in Living Environment.
- The 52 in U.S. History is compensated by the 70 in Integrated Algebra.
- All other exams have scores of 55 or higher.

# Local Diploma: Portfolio Option

- 44 credits (in specific subject)
- Score 55% on ELA and Math regents
- Students who have failed one - three of any regents (except for ELA and Math) can apply for this option with a portfolio of class-based work as evidence and proof of content knowledge
- Staff and student put together portfolio and submit it to the principals or guidance counselors
- Superintendent reviews; accepts or denies



# Portfolio Option Eligibility

If a student with an IEP has:

- Scored a 55% or higher on the ELA and Math regents
- Passed all of the required classes and earned their credits
  - This includes the course that aligns with the regents they failed
- Does not meet the low pass or compensatory
- Has attempted regents exam(s) at least once

# Local Diploma: 4 + 1

- Students who have passed 44 credits (in specific subjects) and failed one regents exam can apply for the +1 option with:
- A department-approved alternative assessment, in place of the failed regent, such as:
  - SAT Subject Tests
  - IB/AB exams
- An earned New York State (NYS) CDOS Commencement Credential.

# Local Diploma Option Review

- **Low Pass Option**
  - 55% on 5 Regents Exams (ELA, Math, Science, Global History, US History)
- **Compensatory Option**
  - 55% on ELA/Math
  - Score of 45-54% can be compensated with 65% on another regents
- **Portfolio Option**
  - 55% on ELA/Math
  - Must have attempted regents once
  - Does not qualify low pass/compensation
- **4+1 Option**
  - Meets all graduation requirements with the exception of one regents exam
  - Obtained a CDOS or department approved assessment as alternative
  - Does not qualify for low pass/compensation/portfolio

# Local Diplomas Are Accepted by

- Some private colleges
- Community colleges
- CUNY colleges
- SUNY colleges
  - Students that receive a Local Diploma and are admitted to a CUNY or SUNY school will take the placement test to determine academic levels
  - If they fail one or more subjects (math, reading, writing), they will be placed in support based remedial classes in order to ensure that students are prepared for college level classes

# High School Equivalency Diploma

- Changed from GED to TASC
- 5 subject areas: Reading, Writing, Math, Science, Social Studies
- Alignment with Common Core
- Accommodations available
- Can enter community college (not 4 year college)

# Types of Credentials

- Skills and Achievement  
Commencement Credential (SACC)
- Career Development and  
Occupational Studies  
Commencement Credential (CDOS)

*No more IEP diploma!*

# Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential (SACC)

- Students must have attended school for 12 years or until age 21
- Students with alternate assessment on their IEPs
- Includes Exit Summary that states:
  - Strengths, skills, interests
  - Academic levels
  - Level of achievement of career development standards
- Not accepted at colleges, military, or vocational schools

# Career Development and Occupational Studies Commencement Credential (CDOS)

- Career Plan, Employability Profile, and Student Exit Summary
- Indicates career readiness for entry-level jobs
- Can be a supplement to diploma
- Not accepted at colleges, military, or vocational schools

*Was formerly only for students with IEPs, but is now open to all students!*



# CDOS Requirements

- Students must have attended school for 12 years or until age 21
- 216 hours of Career & Technical Education (CTE) coursework
  - This includes 54 hours of work-based learning
- Career Plan, Employability Profile, and Student Exit Summary
- **Learning standards:**
  - Career development
  - Integrated learning
  - Universal foundation skills
- Maintain the national work readiness credential requirements (assessment based certification)

# Part II: Beginning to Plan for Transition

# Where to Start: High School Transition Plan

- Students are required to be invited to IEP meetings once the student is 15 years old (but can be involved earlier)
- Should list the student's education, employment, and independent living goals
- Student, parent, and staff should be aware of what diploma/credential option they are working towards
- Vocational assessments should be conducted
- Encourage student engagement

# Best Practices For IEP Meetings:

- Ask for the following documents:
  - Current copy of student's IEP
  - Current copy of student's schedule
  - Total attempted regents
  - Total regents earned
  - CDOS status
  - Transcript
- Have the students attempted credits, total credits, attempted regents, and total regents earned on IEP
- Have the student's credential or diploma goal on IEP
- Have the students current grades, reading, and math levels on IEP

# Schools should

- Have a transition coordinator
- Conduct vocational assessments
  - For both family and students
- Create specific goals on the IEP related to transition plan
- Update the transition plan every year, involve all providers, family, and student
- Talk about student goals, transition plans, and graduation status
- Expose students to possible colleges, career options, vocational trainings
- Provide exit summary upon graduation

# At Home You Can:

Help your child develop self-help skills such as:

- Cooking
- Cleaning
- Self-care
- Travel training
- Money management (bank account)

Encourage self-exploration and decision making:

- Explore your child's career and job interests
- Encourage summer volunteer and work opportunities

Collect student records, transcripts, data reports, all documents from the school

# Employment Options for Students

## **Summer Youth Employment Program**

- DOE places students at a variety of internship sites
- Paid summer internship program for six weeks (July – August)
- Youth between ages of 14 and 24
- Provides job coach (special education teacher/provider)

## **Work, Learn & Grow Employment Program**

- Paid year round internships for varying time frames (Sept – June)
- Youth between ages of 14 and 24
- Must be a SYEP participant

## **Training Opportunities Program**

- Administered by the Transition Coordination Center (formerly Placement and Referral Center)
- Paid internship for students with disabilities
- TOP Liaisons will identify work locations where students with IEPs will earn minimum wage and can work up to 15 hours per week
- Hours count towards CDOS

# Part III: Your Options During Transition



# Post-secondary Options

- College
- Job training programs
  - Certificate Programs
  - Vocational Rehabilitation
- Supported employment programs
- Day habilitation programs
- Residential programs

# College Access

- Applications/tours should begin junior year of HS
- Must apply for accommodations on SATs/ACTs through your guidance counselor
  - Apply at least 2 months before the date of the exam
- Look at schools that have strong Accessibility Offices/ supports provided
- Consider transportation
- Community Colleges do not require SATs/ACTs
  - They look at your transcript and regents scores

# College Access

- Accommodations are available
  - Need certain documentation
  - Hold onto IEPs, evals and exit summary
- Colleges must provide access, not success (different legal requirements)
  - Extra time vs. tutoring
- College Accessibility/Disability Office awareness
- Self identifying and self advocacy from student are necessary
  - Student must be prepared to speak on behalf of their disability and needs

# ACCES-VR (vocational rehabilitation)

- State agency to assist people with disabilities in becoming employable
  - Money for college programs, job training programs, and supported employment programs
  - Accommodations and costs related to job
  - Can pay up to \$15,000 for a single student
- Will assist with college payments, accommodations, and assistive technology
- Ultimate goal: employability

# ACCES-VR Eligibility

## Eligibility:

- Have a disability that interferes with getting or keeping a job
- Can align their capabilities, interests to choice of a career (be able to benefit from VR services)
- Requires vocational rehabilitation to prepare for and secure employment
- Travel trained
- Must be 16 years old to apply
- No age cut off
  
- **Presumed Eligibility:** If you provide proof you receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) that is based on SSA determination of your disability, ACCES-VR will assume you are eligible for services

# ACCES-VR

- Start the process when student is 2 years away from exiting school
  - Every school has an ACCES-VR liaison
  - Persistence and self advocacy are key
  - Process includes:
    - Interview
    - Diagnostic Vocational Assessment
    - Program placement
    - Program interview
    - Begin!
- Focus is on training and obtaining job
- Appealing ACCES-VR decisions: CAP (Client Assistance Program)

# OPWDD

## **OPWDD:** Office for People With Developmental Disabilities

OPWDD is a state agency that works with people who have:

- Developmental Disabilities
- Intellectual Disabilities
- Some TBI
- Autism
- Down Syndrome
- Other disabilities with specific testing scores on IQ / adaptive skills testing

# OPWDD

Some possible services include:

- Medicaid Service Coordination
- Housing
- Employment
- Independent Living
- Socialization Services
- Residential Care
- Self Direction Services
- Day programs
- Respite



# OPWDD

To Apply:

- Contact eligibility officer
- Sign up for a Front Door orientation session in your borough
- Gather all required documents
  - Save every document they give you
- Begin looking into MSC providers
- Note: application can be long and extensive

# OPWDD: Documents Needed

- Psychological evaluation that includes IQ testing & Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales (69 or below)
- Psycho-social and/or social history report
- Medical physical - the same type of physical you would send to a school
- OPWDD transmittal form (online)

# Other Supportive Agencies:

- ***Independent Living Centers (ILCs)***

- Community-based organizations in each borough that help people with disabilities learn independent living skills and find jobs, housing, and benefits.

- ***Office of Mental Health (OMH)***

- Provides support and services, including counseling, to people with mental health disabilities.

- ***AHRC***

- Provides supportive employment, housing, school and in home services and support.

# Other Options To Consider:

- Special Needs Trusts
- The ABLE Act
- Guardianship (partial or full)
- SSI, Medicaid, other benefits
- Housing
- Transportation

# Wrap Up:

- Know your diploma options
- Begin communicating with your young person as early as possible
- Work with school and providers to build transition plan
- Work on self-advocacy skills with your young person
- If your young person goes to college: have them get to know the accessibility office staff and advocate for accommodations
- Apply for OPWDD and/or ACCES-VR as early as possible - they will hold your applications until you're ready for services
- **Document everything, keep everything!**

Thank you!

Questions?

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