

**DIRECTORATE FOR EDUCATION  
EDUCATION POLICY COMMITTEE**

**Group of National Experts on Special Needs Education**

**COUNTRY REPORT FOR THE UNITED STATES  
PATHWAYS FOR DISABLED STUDENTS TO TERTIARY EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT**

*This document is the Country Report produced by the United States in the context of the EDPC activity on Pathways for Disabled Students to Tertiary Education and Employment. It is one in a series of Country Reports prepared by the countries participating in this activity. Each Report is published under the responsibility of the country that has prepared it and the views expressed in this document remain those of the country author(s) and not necessarily those of the OECD or its member countries.*

*The Group of National Experts on Special Needs Education last met in 2008. However, the remaining outputs of the project "Pathways for Disabled Students to Tertiary Education and Employment" continue to be given this reference to maintain coherence to previous material produced by the Group.*

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## ABBREVIATIONS

<i>ADA</i>	<i>Americans with Disabilities Act</i>
AHEAD	Association for Higher Education and Disability
<i>ARRA</i>	<i>American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009</i>
<i>ATA</i>	<i>Assistive Technology Act</i>
CEC	Council for Exceptional Children
C.F.R.	Code of Federal Regulations
CLD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CPRC	Community Parent Resource Centers
CSAVR	Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation
CTE	Career and Technical Education
DCDT	Division on Career Development and Transition (of CEC)
DD	Developmental Disabilities
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
DOJ	Department of Justice
DOL	Department of Labor
<i>EAHCA</i>	<i>Education for All Handicapped Children Act</i>
EBD	Emotional and Behavioral Disabilities
ED	Department of Education
EN	Employment Network
<i>ESEA</i>	<i>Elementary and Secondary Education Act</i>
ETA	Employment and Training Administration
<i>FLSA</i>	<i>Fair Labor Standards Act</i>
FRC	The Federal Resource Center
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GED	General Education Development
GPA	Grade Point Average
<i>HEA</i>	<i>Higher Education Act</i>
<i>HIPAA</i>	<i>Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act</i>
HRTW	Healthy and Ready to Work
HS/HT	High School/High Tech
<i>IDEA</i>	<i>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act</i>
IEP	Individualized Education Program
IES	Institute of Education Sciences
IHE	Institutions of higher education
IPE	Individual Plan for Employment
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
LEA	Local Education Agency
NASDSE	National Association of State Directors of Special Education
NCD	National Council on Disability
NCES	National Center for Education Statistics
<i>NCLB</i>	<i>No Child Left Behind Act</i>
NCSE	National Center for Special Education Research

NCSET	National Center for Secondary Education and Transition
NDPC-SD	National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities
NFI	New Freedom Initiative
NIMH	National Institute of Mental Health
NLTS	National Longitudinal Transition Study
NPSAS	National Postsecondary Student Aid Study
NPSO	National Post-School Outcomes Center
NSTTAC	National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center
OCR	Office for Civil Rights
OSEP	Office of Disability Employment Policy
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs
OSERS	Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
OVAE	Office of Vocational and Adult Education
PACER	Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights
PASS	Plan for Achieving Self-Support
P.L.	Public Law
PLUS	Parent Loan for Undergraduate Student
PTI	Parent Training and Information Center
RRC	Regional Resource Centers
RSA	Rehabilitation Services Administration
RTI	Response to Intervention
SAMHSA	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
SAT	Scholastic Aptitude Test
SCANS	Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills
SEA	State Educational Agency
SEIA	Student Earned Income Exclusion
SEOG	Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant
SGA	Substantial Gainful Activity
SLD	Specific Learning Disability
SPLO	Secondary to Postsecondary Learning Opportunity
SSA	Social Security Administration
SSD:	Social Security Disability Insurance
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
STOMP	Specialized Training of Military Parents
SUR	Student Unit Record
TATRA	Technical Assistance on Transition and the Rehabilitation Act
<i>TWWIIAA</i>	<i>Ticket to Work and Work Incentive Improvement Act</i>
UCEDD	University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
U.S.C.	United States Code
VR	Vocational Rehabilitation
<i>WIA</i>	<i>Workforce Investment Act</i>

## OVERVIEW

The following report has been prepared as part of the Pathways for Students with Disabilities to Tertiary Education and Employment project being conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

### **Structure of Education in the United States**

In the United States, the laws that apply to youths with disabilities in compulsory education may create distinct rights and obligations from those that apply to individuals with disabilities once they enter tertiary education and employment. Compulsory education includes primary school (most often called elementary school), middle school, and secondary school (commonly referred to as high school). Tertiary education, which is optional, is quite separate from compulsory education as far as admissions, curriculum, governance, finance, and policy. Tertiary education includes nondegree programs that lead to certificates and diplomas plus six degree levels: associate (a 2-year degree), bachelor's (a 4-year degree), first professional, master's, advanced intermediate, and research doctorate (3 to 6 years). The following website provides more information on the structure of education in the United States: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ous/international/usnei/us/edlite-structure-us.html>.

### **Role of Federal, State, and Local Entities in Transition Programs**

Education programs and those programs and services designed to assist students in making the transition from secondary school to tertiary education are largely funded by federal, state, and local governments. Several federal government agencies have assumed key roles in helping support state and local efforts to improve transition services of students with disabilities through enforcement of civil rights laws, interagency coordination, systems change, model demonstrations, and research efforts. State and local education agencies (SEAs and LEAs) facilitate the transition of high school students with disabilities through coordinated planning among special educators, general educators, community service agencies, families, and students. The following website provides more information on transition programs and services: <http://www.ncset.org/publications/discussionpaper>.

### **Transition to Tertiary Education and Employment**

The United States continues to invest in improving access to education and employment preparation programs and in increasing the social and economic independence of youths. The chief indicator of the effectiveness of the educational system for preparing youths for adult independence is successful transition from secondary schooling to employment and postsecondary education (Baer et al., 2003; Madaus and Shaw, 2004; Wagner, Newman, Cameto and Levine, 2006).

During the past 30 years, major transformations have occurred in educational, social, political, and economic areas that affect the education and development of youths with disabilities and the institutions that support them. For example, in response to the expectation that students be educated in the least restrictive environment, more students with disabilities attend schools in their own neighborhood—schools that may not have been available to them previously—and fewer students are educated in separate

buildings or classrooms and are instead educated in classes with their peers. In 2007, approximately 51 percent of youths with disabilities, ages 12–17, were educated in general education settings greater than 80 percent of the time (<http://www.ideadata.org>, 2009). Anti-discrimination laws, such as the *American with Disabilities Act*, have improved access to Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) and employment in a variety of occupations for individuals with disabilities. Furthermore, along with their peers in the general population, youths with disabilities are increasingly focusing on postsecondary education. Postsecondary education is a primary post-high school goal for more than four out of five secondary school students with disabilities who have transition plans ([http://www.nlts2.org/reports/2009\\_04/nlts2\\_report\\_2009\\_04\\_complete.pdf](http://www.nlts2.org/reports/2009_04/nlts2_report_2009_04_complete.pdf)).

Through the Federal Interagency Partners in Transition Workgroup (Workgroup), a number of federal agencies are working together to address youth, transition, and disability issues. The Workgroup addresses issues related to: (1) strengthening connections with employers; (2) preparing youths for productive careers in a challenging labor market; (3) promoting the quality of, and access to, services for youths with disabilities; and (4) promoting transparent program outcomes (results) that meet the needs of youths with disabilities. The Workgroup consists of staff from the following federal agencies:

- National Council on Disability (NCD);
- U.S. Department of Education (ED)—Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE), Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE);
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)—Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD), Office of Disability (OD), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC);
- U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)—Civil Rights Division, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP);
- U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)—Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), Employment and Training Administration (ETA);
- U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)—Federal Transit Administration (FTA);
- U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC); and
- U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA).

Coordination of transition services provided by federal, state, and local governments continues to present many challenges. U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) reports over the past decade highlight the need for greater coordination among education and training agencies in addressing the complexities of youth transitions (GAO, 2008; 2003). In addition, while IHEs report facing a variety of challenges in serving students with disabilities, the U.S. Department of Education continues to discuss the need for a more coordinated approach to guide technical assistance efforts (GAO, 2009).

## CHAPTER 1. DIFFERENCES IN DEFINITIONS OF DISABILITY: IMPLICATIONS FOR TRANSITION

Chapter 1 addresses the differences in definitions of the term “disability” in relation to various federal laws and the implications for transition planning for youths with disabilities in the United States.

### Differences in Definitions of Disability for Children and Adults

The differences in definitions of the term “disability” for children and adults have important implications for youths with disabilities transition to adulthood and affect individuals with disabilities’ rights and responsibilities as they leave the secondary education system for tertiary education, employment, and adult service systems. These differences also can affect access to, and the continuation of, monetary and health-care benefits that are often essential to successful transition.

**Definitions Under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*.** Section 1401 of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, as amended by the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (Act or IDEA)* defines a “child with a disability” as a child with mental retardation, a hearing impairment (including deafness), a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment (including blindness), a serious emotional disturbance (referred to in this title as “emotional disturbance”), an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, and other health impairment, or specific learning disability, deaf blindness or multiple disabilities; and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services [20 U.S.C. 1401(3)(A); 34 C.F.R. §300.8(a)(1)].

Note: Appendix I provides definitions of disability categories in *IDEA*.

**Implications for Transition.** When a student is determined to be eligible for special education and related services under *IDEA* he or she is entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE), in addition to other rights and protections afforded by *IDEA*. Beginning not later than the first individualized education program (IEP)<sup>1</sup> to be in effect when the child is 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team, and updated annually thereafter, the child’s IEP must include (1) appropriate measureable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills; and (2) the transition services (including the courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals [20 U.S.C. §1414 (d)(1)(A)(i)(VIII); 34 C.F.R. §300.320(b)]. *IDEA* regulations permit states to terminate services under *IDEA* due to graduation from secondary school with a regular diploma, or due to exceeding the age of eligibility for FAPE under state law (34 C.F.R. §300.305(e)(2)).

Therefore, the accuracy and validity of identification approaches becomes critical to ensure that students receive services that will lead to success as they enter tertiary education and employment, or adult service systems.

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<sup>1</sup> The term “individualized education program” or “IEP” means a written statement for each child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised in accordance with Section 614(d) of the *Act* [20 U.S.C. 1401(14); 34 C.F.R. §300.320(a)].



**Definitions for Social Security Administration (SSA) Programs.** The Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disability programs are the largest of several federal programs that provide assistance to people with disabilities. While these two programs are different in many ways, both are administered by the SSA. SSDI pays benefits to disabled workers who are “insured” (i.e., who have worked and paid social security taxes long enough based on their age and disability onset date), as well as to certain dependent family members. SSDI also pays benefits to certain disabled widows and disabled adult children. SSI pays disability benefits to individuals based on financial need, many of whom have little or no work experience. The definition of disability under SSA programs is different than other programs in that no benefits are payable for conditions determined to be “partial disability” or “short-term disability.”

To meet the definition of disability to receive SSI benefits from birth to attainment of age 18, a child must be medically determined to have a physical and/or mental impairment that results in severe functional limitations, which has lasted (or can be expected to last) for a continuous period of no less than 12 months or result in death (20 C.F.R. §416.906). At attainment of age 18, children with disabilities determined eligible for SSI must meet the adult definition of “disability” in order to continue to receive SSI benefits. SSA’s definition of adult disability for entitlement to SSI and/or SSDI benefits is based on the inability to engage in substantial gainful work activity by reason of a medically determinable physical or mental impairment (or combination of impairments) that is expected to result in death or has lasted (or is expected to last) for not less than 12 months [20 C.F.R. §404.1505 (SSDI) and 20 C.F.R. §416.905 3(SSDI)]. “Blindness” is defined as “central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with best correction or a specified limitation in the field of vision in their better eye. An adult is considered disabled: (1) if he or she cannot adjust to any prior work or any other type of work available in the nation because of one or more physical and/or mental condition(s); and (2) his or her disability has lasted or is expected to last for at least one year, or to result in death [20 C.F.R. §404.1581 (SSDI) and 20 C.F.R. §416.98–.985 (SSI)].

**Implications for Transition.** Each year, approximately 55,000 children receiving SSI attain age 18 and undergo a new disability determination using the adult criteria. Approximately 33 percent (18,000 per year) do not meet the adult criteria and their SSI benefits end. Many of them also lose their eligibility for health-care coverage. A growing body of empirical literature indicates that severe health problems and disabilities in childhood are associated with limited human capital development and negative labor market and social outcomes in adulthood (e.g., low rates of employment, low wages, and higher arrest rates). Data collected between June 2001 and July 2002 for SSA’s National Survey of SSI Children and Families (NSCF) suggest that children determined to be eligible for SSI, who become ineligible to benefits as adults upon attainment of age 18, have fewer functional limitations and are more likely to work (and to work full-time) than those who continue to receive SSI. However, according to Loprest and Wittenburg (2007):

[a]bout half of those no longer receiving SSI benefits are not in tertiary education or employment or they have dropped out of school, and a significant percentage have incomes below the poverty level. Further, over half do not have health insurance. Because many of the individuals who are no longer receiving SSI continue to have some functional problems, the lack of access to public health insurance (only 25 percent have Medicaid) is also a cause for concern. The following website provides more information: <http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/PDFs/Disability/changingcircumstancespdf>.

## **Definitions of Disability Under the *Americans with Disabilities Act* and Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973***

**Definition of Disability.** Additional definitions of disability are contained in the two federal laws that protect individuals with disabilities from discrimination in education settings. The 1990 *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)* and Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* (Section 504) both define a person with a disability as someone who: (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual, or (2) has a record of such an impairment, or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment. Major life activities include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working. See 42 U.S.C. §12102 (*ADA*); 29 U.S.C. §706 (*Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as amended).

Effective January 1, 2009, the *ADA Amendment Act (ADAAA) of 2008* significantly reversed major judicial interpretations of the definition of an “individual with disability” under the 1990 *ADA*, and included a conforming amendment to the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* that aligns the meaning of disability in Section 504 to the *ADA*. The *ADAAA* retains the *ADA*’s definition of “disability,” but emphasizes that the definition of disability shall be construed in favor of broad coverage to the maximum extent permitted by the terms of the *ADA* as amended. The *ADAAA* further expands the list of examples of “major life activities” and “major bodily functions.” Among other things, the *ADAAA* also clarifies that an impairment, which is episodic or in remission, is a disability if it substantially limits a major life activity when active. The following websites provide further information: [http://www.eeoc.gov/ada/amendments\\_notice.html](http://www.eeoc.gov/ada/amendments_notice.html); [http://www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/qanda\\_adaaa\\_nprm.html](http://www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/qanda_adaaa_nprm.html); <https://www.ada.gov>; and <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq.html>.

The U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights (OCR) enforces several federal civil rights laws, including Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by all entities that receive federal financial assistance from ED) and Title II of the *ADA* (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by public entities, whether or not they receive federal financial assistance). The OCR website provides further information regarding its role: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/aboutocr.html>. The Office of Civil Rights is currently evaluating the impact of the *ADAAA* on OCR’s enforcement responsibilities under Section 504 and Title II of the *ADA*, including whether any changes in regulations, guidance, or other publications are appropriate. As this process goes forward, however, ED’s Section 504 regulations, as currently written, are valid and OCR is enforcing them consistent with the *ADAAA*. The Office of Civil Right’s website provides frequently asked questions about Section 504 and the education of children with disabilities at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq.html>, and provides information about the transition of students with disabilities from compulsory to tertiary education, specifically:

- 1) Transition of Students with Disabilities to Postsecondary Education: A Guide for High School Educators, available at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transitionguide.html>;
- 2) Auxiliary Aids and Services for Postsecondary Students with Disabilities, available at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/auxaids.html>;
- 3) Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities, available at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>;
- 4) “Dear Colleague” Letter and “Dear Parent” Letter (both of March 16, 2007) on Rights and Responsibilities of Students with Disabilities Transitioning from Secondary to Postsecondary Education, available at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-20070316.html> and at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/parent-20070316.html>, respectively.

**Implications for Transition.** Transition for youths with disabilities has been referred to as the “transition cliff” (Podmostko, 2007). This is because of the shifts in eligibility for adult services, (i.e., vocational rehabilitation, programs and cash benefits) and the complexities involved in accessing programs after secondary school. Special education services and supports under *IDEA*, including transition services, are entitlements for eligible children and youths with disabilities in compulsory education. In tertiary educational settings, also referred to as IHEs, Section 504 mandates equal access to educational opportunities for otherwise-qualified individuals with documented disabilities, as opposed to the requirements of *IDEA*. Most IHEs have a disability support services office to provide students with equal access to educational opportunities. Under Section 504 and Title II, institutions must provide academic adjustments and auxiliary aids and services and make reasonable modifications to policies, practices, or procedures when necessary to avoid disability-based discrimination, unless the institutions can demonstrate that a fundamental alteration or undue burden would occur [28 C.F.R. § 35.130(b)(7), more commonly known as the Title II Regulation) and 34 C.F.R. § 104.44(a),(b),(d), more commonly known as the Section 504 Regulation)]. Examples of adjustments or modifications include: changes in the length of time for completion of degree or course requirements; adjusting a student’s course load or schedule; and flexible policies regarding withdrawal from school and tuition and fee reimbursement.

**Definition of Disability Under the *Higher Education Opportunities Act (HEOA)*.** In addition to the definitions of disability, which apply to higher education through civil rights law, the *Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008* defined a student with an intellectual disability as a student with mental retardation or cognitive impairment, characterized by significant limitations in intellectual or cognitive functioning; and adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills; and who is currently, or was formerly, eligible for FAPE under *IDEA* [HEA, §760(2)].

**Implications for Transition.** ED’s Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) administers *The Model Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID)*, which provides grants to IHEs or consortia of IHEs to enable them to create or expand high-quality, inclusive model comprehensive transition and postsecondary programs for students with intellectual disabilities. These programs will establish comprehensive transition and postsecondary programs that provide individual supports and services for the academic and social inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in academic courses, extracurricular activities, and other aspects of the IHE’s regular postsecondary program. The following website provides more information: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/tpsid/index.html>.

**Definition of Disability for Adult Programs.** There is no single, universally accepted definition of disability across adult service programs, such as SSI and services available through the *Workforce Investment Act (WIA)* or categories related to census data collection through DOL’s Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Over 60 federal statutory definitions of disability have been documented as being used for purposes of entitlement to public income support programs, government services, or statistical analyses (ICDR, 2003). As students leave the secondary school and special education and related services required under *IDEA*, they often face obstacles, including the loss of financial support and health benefits. For example, eligibility for adult service programs is often restricted to those who have the greatest need for services, services provided and eligibility criteria vary at the state and local levels, waiting lists may be long, and services may be very limited in rural areas (<http://www.rehabnetwork.org>; Lamb, 2006).

## CHAPTER 2. COMPARISON OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND THE GENERAL STUDENT POPULATION: STATISTICAL DATA

Chapter 2 compares data on students with disabilities with data on the general student population in the United States, including trends over the last 10 years. Most data included in this section for students with disabilities were taken from the National Longitudinal Transition Studies (NLTS and NLTS2) (<http://www.nlts2.org>). The majority of data reported for the general student population were taken from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (<http://nces.ed.gov>). Specifically the NCES general population comparison data were taken from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, 1997 (NLSY97). The study included a nationally representative sample of approximately 9,000 youths who were 12 to 16 years old as of December 31, 1996. Round 1 of the survey took place in 1997. In that round, both the eligible youths and one of each youth's parents received hour-long personal interviews. Youths have continued to be interviewed annually. Comparison data for the report were taken from the 2001 data collection for youths who were 17 to 21 years old and out of high school at the time, to match the sample of NLTS2 youths. Calculations were made from public-use data available at <http://www.nlsinfo.org/web-investigator/webgator.php>.

The common challenge in data collection is that states do not have the capacity to share data across agencies (Johnson, 2004). Furthermore, data experts express concern about the overlap of reporting requirements for various federal programs. Therefore, it is necessary that federal and state agencies develop clear data definitions and collaborate in collecting, organizing, and analyzing accurate data on tertiary outcomes for youths with disabilities (National Council on Disability, 2008; Interagency Committee on Disability Research, Subcommittee on Employment, June 23, 2008).

### Data Summaries on Transition Studies

**NLTS and NLTS2.** ED began conducting extensive research through NLTS (NLTS, 1985–1993 and NLTS2, 2000–2010) in order to identify and report on changes experienced by secondary school students with disabilities as they transition to adulthood. NLTS (Cohort 1) included a nationally representative sample of approximately 14,000 youths (ages 15–23) receiving special education services in the 1985–86 school-year. NLTS, whose first survey was conducted in 1987, assessed the influences of individual and household characteristics, school experiences, and related services on the students' outcomes.

NLTS2 (Cohort 2) was a 10-year study of more than 11,000 students that examined the characteristics, experiences, and outcomes of youths with disabilities, ages 13–16 (in 2000–01) receiving special education services in grade 7 or above, under *IDEA*. The study was designed to collect data on sample members from multiple sources in five waves, beginning in 2001 and ending in 2009. When similar data items were available, comparisons were made between youths with disabilities and the same-age youths in the general population. Comparison data were taken from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youths, 1997 (NLSY97), 2001 data collection, and the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, (ADD Health), Wave 3, collected in 2001–02.

The most recent report from NLTS2 (Newman et al., 2009) is organized to provide information on out-of-high school youths with disabilities in several key domains, including the following:

- The Early Adulthood of Youths with Disabilities
- Tertiary Education
- Employment
- Productive Engagement in the Community
- Household Circumstances of Out-of-High School Youths with Disabilities
- Social and Community Involvement of Out-of-High School Youths with Disabilities

***The Condition of Education.*** The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), located within the Institute of Education Sciences of the U.S. Department of Education, is the primary federal entity for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data related to education in the United States and other nations. NCES fulfills a congressional mandate to collect, collate, analyze, and report full and complete statistics on the condition of education in the United States; conduct and publish reports and specialized analyses of the meaning and significance of such statistics; assist state and local education agencies in improving their statistical systems; and review and report on education activities in foreign countries.

To ensure reliable, accurate, and timely data, which are necessary to monitor the progress of education in the United States, Congress has mandated that NCES produce an annual report, *The Condition of Education*, which presents trends and recent developments in U.S. education. Each edition of *The Condition of Education* presents a series of indicators using the most recent national and international data available from either NCES or other sources that are relevant to the indicator. The most recent edition, *The Condition of Education 2010* presents 49 indicators of developments and trends that focus on student participation and persistence in education, their performance and other measures of achievement, their environment for learning, and the general population's educational resources (see <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/statement/index.asp>).

Note: Appendix II provides additional information about federal and national data collection initiatives.

### **Trends in Participation in Tertiary Education and Other Training Programs**

According to the most recent NLTS2 report by Newman et al., (2009), students in the general population, along with students with disabilities, focus more on tertiary education as a primary post-high school goal than in the past. In addition, there has been an increase of youths with disabilities taking rigorous academic courses in high school, including college-preparatory courses, such as a foreign language and science.

However, even when their high school programs prepare them for tertiary education, students with disabilities often encounter a variety of challenges in the transition from secondary to tertiary school. Tertiary schools are guided by a legal framework of rights and responsibilities that is different from the framework governing secondary schools. When students leave high school, their education no longer is covered under *IDEA*, as indicated in chapter 1.

For youths with disabilities, 45 percent were reported to have continued on to tertiary education within 4 years of leaving high school, whereas tertiary school enrollment for youths in the general population was 53 percent. Furthermore, rates of enrollment varied by type of tertiary program. Of all youths with disabilities who finished high school, more were reported to have enrolled in 2-year or community colleges (32 percent) than in vocational, business, or technical schools (23 percent) or 4-year colleges or universities (14 percent).

Enrollment in tertiary education varied widely by disability category, with attendance since high school ranging from 27 percent to 78 percent. With enrollment rates of 70 percent and higher, youths with visual or hearing impairments were more likely to attend tertiary education than were those in several other disability categories. For example, youths with visual or hearing impairments were more likely to attend tertiary education (78 percent and 72 percent, respectively) than were those with speech/language or other health impairments (55 percent), orthopedic impairments (54 percent), learning disabilities (47 percent), multiple disabilities (35 percent), emotional disturbances (34 percent), or mental retardation (27 percent).

Youths in many of the disability categories were more likely to have attended a tertiary program than were youths with emotional disturbances (34 percent) or youths with mental retardation (27 percent).

### **Course of Study in Tertiary Education**

Tertiary education frequently offers a wide range of instructional program options. For example, NCES's "Classification of Instructional Programs" taxonomy describes more than 60 major postsecondary fields of study, not including hundreds of intermediate and specific instructional program subcategories. With this range of options, students with disabilities varied in the types of courses they took while in postsecondary school. Students who attended 2-year colleges were more likely to be enrolled in an academic than in a vocational course of study, with 57 percent majoring in academic areas and 29 percent in vocational areas. Eleven percent reported both an academic and vocational focus, and 3 percent attended classes primarily for recreation and personal interest. Students who had a primarily vocational focus at 2-year colleges and students who attended postsecondary vocational, business, or technical schools, were enrolled in a range of vocational majors:

- Careers in skilled crafts (e.g., plumbing, carpentry) or mechanics (13%);
- Health care; computers; education or child care; or the arts (including graphic design) (11%);
- Food service or business (8%);
- Clerical opportunities (7%); and
- Personal services, engineering, communication, or criminal justice (less than 5%).

Students with disabilities at 4-year colleges also focused on a broad range of majors:

- Social sciences (20%);
- Education (19%);
- The Arts (18%);
- Business (12%);
- Math or science major (11%);
- Engineering or other liberal arts major (6%);
- Computers, health-care, communication, or criminal justice (less than 5%); and
- Had not chosen a major (10%).

Note: In the general population, business, education, social sciences, psychology, and visual and performing arts also were prevalent majors, accounting for 51 percent of bachelor's degrees awarded in 2005.

### **Employment Status After High School**

In examining the employment status and experiences of youths with disabilities who had been out of high school up to 4 years, 57 percent of youths with disabilities who had left high school were employed for pay outside the home. Sixty-six percent of similarly aged youths (17 to 21 years old) in the general population were employed for pay outside the home. A larger majority of youths with disabilities (72 percent) had been employed for pay outside the home at some point since leaving high school.

**Nature of Employment (Type of Work and Wages).** Out-of-high school youths with disabilities held a variety of types of jobs:

- Food Service (17%);
- Skilled laborer (11%);
- Cashier (10%);
- Assembly/sorting/stuffing, auto service, and unskilled jobs (3 to 4%); and
- Child care or recreation, cleaning, gardening and grounds maintenance, retail sales, or stocking/shipping and receiving (5 to 6%).

Note: In terms of wages, youths with disabilities who had been out of high school 1 to 4 years earned an average of \$8.20 per hour, reported in 2005 dollars, which was not a significant difference from the average of \$9.20 per hour of youths in the general population (Newman et al., 2009).

**Effects of Gender, Income, Race/Ethnicity on Employment.** Gender, income, race, and ethnicity are important factors that affect employment rates for youths with disabilities. The following discrepancies for youths with disabilities were found in the NLTS2 research:

- Gender: Males were more likely than females to work full-time (68 percent vs. 35 percent).
- Household income: Youths from households earning more than \$50,000 were more likely than youths from households earning \$25,000 or less to have held a job over the time since leaving high school (81 percent vs. 61 percent).
- Race/Ethnicity: At the time of the interview, 63 percent of White youths were employed, compared with 35 percent of African-American youths. The percentages of these youths who had been employed since leaving high school also differed significantly, with 80 percent of White youths having been employed since high school compared with 47 percent of African-American youths.

## CHAPTER 3. POLICIES AFFECTING TRANSITIONAL STUDENTS

Chapter 3 provides a summary of this administration's guiding principles as they pertain to challenges facing individuals with disabilities, the mission and goals of the federal departments and agencies involved in this work, and the key national initiatives relevant to transition to tertiary education and employment.

### **Guiding Principles of the Obama Administration**

The Obama Administration has established the following guiding principles to support work to nurture a society that values the contributions of all of our citizens and residents, including the 54 million people in this country living with disabilities.

**Health-care Reform.** President Obama placed comprehensive health reform at the top of his domestic policy agenda. On March 23, 2010, he signed into law a bill to make health care more affordable, make health insurers more accountable, expand health coverage to all Americans, and make the health system sustainable, stabilizing family budgets, the federal budget, and the economy.

**Access to Community Living Services.** Many people who need assistance with daily activities are faced with a difficult choice: They can move into a nursing home, which may have safety and quality of care problems; or they can remain in their community, which may not provide the necessary services to meet their personal needs. The President promotes federal leadership toward ending the financial bias to place persons who need assistance into institutions and more rigorously enforcing the Supreme Court's Olmstead decision, which requires states to eliminate unnecessary segregation of persons with disabilities and provide those individuals with services in the most integrated community settings as appropriate [(527 U.S.C. 581 (1999)]. The Administration wants to build on existing efforts to encourage states to shift more of their services away from institutions and into the community, such as the Money Follows the Person (MFP) initiative, developed by Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and states, which is both cost-effective and allows individuals to be more engaged. The following website provides more information on the MFP initiative: <https://www.cms.gov/RealChoice/downloads/MFP.pdf>.

**Civil Rights Protection.** *ADA* is a landmark law that has done much to protect individuals with disabilities from discrimination. However, this administration underscores the need for more consistent and effective enforcement of the *ADA* (and *ADAAA*), to help prevent discrimination in employment, public services, public accommodations, and telecommunications.

**Expansion of Educational Opportunities.** The Obama Administration supports educational opportunities for individuals with disabilities and will expand funding for programs like *IDEA* that ensure that all Americans have access to the tools to succeed. The Obama Administration also supports increased monitoring of *IDEA*.

**Access to Employment.** The Obama Administration is committed to expanding access to employment by having the federal government lead by example in hiring people with disabilities; enforcing existing laws; providing technical assistance and information on accommodations for individuals with disabilities; removing barriers to work; and identifying and removing barriers to employment for



people receiving public benefits. The following website provides more information on the guiding principles of the current administration: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/disabilities>.

### **The Mission and Goals of Relevant Federal Departments and Agencies**

**U.S. Department of Education** (<http://www.ed.gov>). The mission of ED is to strengthen the federal commitment to assuring access to equal educational opportunity for every individual; to supplement and complement the efforts of states, the local school systems, and other instrumentalities of the states, the private sector, public and private nonprofit educational research institutions, community-based organizations, parents, and students to improve the quality of education; to encourage the increased involvement of the public, parents, and students in federal education programs; and to increase the accountability of federal education programs to the president, Congress, and the public.

- **Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS)**. The mission of OSERS provides leadership to achieve full integration and participation of individuals with disabilities in society by ensuring equal opportunities in, access to, and excellence in education, employment, and community living. In implementing this mission, OSERS administers programs that help educate children and youths with disabilities, provides for and supports the rehabilitation of youths and adults with disabilities, and supports research to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities.
- **Office for Civil Rights (OCR)**. The mission of OCR is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the nation through vigorous enforcement of civil rights. OCR enforces Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II *ADA* 1990, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability.
- **Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE)**. The mission of OVAE is to administer and coordinate programs that are related to adult education and literacy, career and technical education, and community colleges.
- **Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE)**. The mission of OPE is to formulate federal postsecondary education policy and administer programs that address critical national needs in support of this mission to increase access to high-quality postsecondary education. OPE includes two major components: (1) policy, planning, and innovation; and (2) higher education programs.

**U.S. Department of Labor** (<http://www.dol.gov>). The mission of DOL is to foster and promote the welfare of the job seekers, wage earners, and retirees of the United States by improving working conditions, advancing opportunities for profitable employment, protecting retirement and health-care benefits, helping potential employers find workers, strengthening free collective bargaining, and tracking changes in employment, prices, and other national economic measurements.

- **Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)**. The mission of ODEP is to increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities by expanding access to training, education, employment supports, assistive technology, integrated employment, entrepreneurial development, and small-business opportunities. The agency also builds partnerships with employers and state and local agencies to increase awareness of the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities and to facilitate the use of effective strategies.
- **Employment and Training Administration (ETA)**. The mission of ETA is to contribute to the more efficient functioning of the U.S. labor market by providing high-quality job training, employment, labor market information, and income maintenance services primarily through state and local workforce development systems.

**Social Security Administration** (<http://www.ssa.gov>). The mission of SSA is to deliver social security services that meet the changing needs of the public. The agency's responsibilities include assigning social security numbers to U.S. citizens; maintaining earnings records for workers under their social security numbers; and administering the SSI program for the aged, blind, and disabled.

- **Office of Employment Support Programs.** This office oversees and directs the planning, policy, and implementation of SSA's Ticket to Work Program, the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program, the Ticket to Work Protection and Advocacy Program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Agency Reimbursement Program. They also oversee systems automation in support of these programs. The Ticket to Work program provides rehabilitation, employment services and supports, and assistance to SSDI and SSI disability recipients in obtaining and maintaining employment. This office also provides assistance in outreach to, and in education of, the public about disability program work incentives, rehabilitation, and other forms of employment support.
- **Office of Program Development and Research (OPDR).** This office conducts research and directs studies of policy issues related to program development and evaluation of disability, SSI program initiatives, and legislative and policy proposals. In addition, the office designs, implements, and evaluates demonstration projects that target special population and program issues. They are responsible for evaluating the Ticket to Work program and develops, refines, and implements policy and procedures on SSDI and SSI work incentives that help disabled beneficiaries return to work and become self-sufficient.

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services** (<http://www.hhs.gov>). The mission of HHS, through the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), is to promote and ensure that people have equal access to and opportunity to participate in and receive services from all HHS programs without facing unlawful discrimination, and that the privacy of their health information is protected while ensuring access to care. Through prevention and elimination of unlawful discrimination and by protecting the privacy of individually identifiable health information, OCR helps HHS carry out its overall mission of improving the health and well-being of all people affected by its many programs. Within HHS, the Office on Disability (OD) oversees the implementation and coordination of programs and policies that enhance the health and well-being of people with disabilities across all ages, races, and ethnicities.

- **Administration for Children and Families (ACF).** The Administration for Children and Families is responsible for federal programs that promote the economic and social well-being of families, children, individuals, and communities. The programs aim to achieve the following: (1) empowering families and individuals to increase their own economic independence and productivity; (2) providing strong, healthy, supportive communities that have a positive impact on the quality of life and the development of children; (3) partnering with individuals, frontline service providers, communities, American Indian tribes, Native communities, states, and Congress that enable solutions that transcend traditional agency boundaries; (4) planning, reforming, and integrating services to improve needed access; and (5) promoting a strong commitment to working with people with developmental disabilities, refugees, and migrants to address their needs, strengths, and abilities. Within ACF, the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD) provides grant funds to enable partnerships with state governments, local communities, and the private sector to assist people with developmental disabilities by helping them to reach their maximum potential. As part of an emphasis area in education, ADD has funded a national training initiative called the Consortium for Postsecondary Education for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities.
- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).** The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities. Its vision involves working toward a life in the community for everyone. To realize this vision, the Agency has sharply focused its mission on

building resilience and facilitating recovery for people with or at-risk for mental or substance use disorders. The Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) is the federal agency within SAMHSA that leads national efforts to improve prevention and mental health treatment services and administers, among other programs, the Healthy Transitions Initiative.

## CHAPTER 4. LAWS RELEVANT TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Chapter 4 addresses the legislation relevant to individuals with disabilities in the U.S. It provides a summary of current government legislation that affects individuals with disabilities transition to tertiary education and employment.

### *Existing Legislation Relevant to Transition to Tertiary Education and Employment*

***Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).*** This Act is administered by ED's OSERS. The purposes of *IDEA* 2004 (P.L. 108-446), include ensuring that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living [20 U.S.C. §1400(d)(1)(A); 34 C.F.R. §300.1(a)].

***IDEA and Transition Services.*** *The Individuals with Disabilities Act* has a number of provisions related to transition from secondary to post-school activities. As stated earlier, the term "transition services" means a "coordinated set of activities" for a child with a disability that:

- 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 post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment); continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;
- Is based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests; and
- 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 [20 U.S.C. §1401(34); 34 C.F.R. §300.43(a)].

The term "related services" means transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, and includes speech-language pathology and audiology services, interpreting services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, including therapeutic recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, and medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes. Related services also include school health services and school nurse services, social work services in schools, and parent counseling and training. Related services do not include a medical device that is surgically implanted, the optimization of that device's functioning (e.g., mapping), maintenance of that device, or the replacement of that device [34 C.F.R. §§300.34(a) and (b)(1)].

The Act requires that IEPs address how the educational program will improve the academic, developmental, and functional needs of the child and will facilitate transition to post-school activities, including postsecondary (tertiary) education. The specific transition services are described in the IEP of the child. Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child is 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team, and updated annually thereafter the IEP must include:

- Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills; and
- The transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals [20 U.S.C. §1414(d)(1)(A)(i)(VIII)(aa) and (bb); 34 C.F.R. §300.320(b)].

A summary of performance is required for each child with an IEP whose eligibility for services under *IDEA* terminates due to graduation from secondary school with a regular diploma or due to exceeding the age eligibility for FAPE under state law. The LEA must provide the child with a summary of the child's academic achievement and functional performance, which shall include recommendations on how to assist the child in meeting the child's postsecondary goals [20 U.S.C. §1414(c)(5)(B)(ii); 34 C.F.R. §300.305(e)(3)].

***Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).*** The *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* is administered by ED's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE). The purpose of Title I of *ESEA* (P.L. 107-110) is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and state academic assessments. This purpose can be accomplished by, among other things:

- Ensuring that high-quality academic assessments, accountability systems, teacher preparation and training, curriculum, and instructional materials are aligned with challenging state academic standards so that students, teachers, parents, and administrators can measure progress against common expectations for student academic achievement; and
- Meeting the educational needs of low-achieving children in the nation's highest-poverty schools, limited English proficient children, migratory children, children with disabilities, Indian children, neglected or delinquent children, and young children in need of reading assistance (20 U.S.C. §6301).

***ESEA and Transition Services.*** Together, *ESEA* and *IDEA* provisions and requirements combine to provide both individualized instruction and school accountability for students with disabilities. That is, the progress and performance of students with disabilities is now a shared responsibility of general and special education teachers. Enhanced accountability for students with disabilities has elevated them in the consciousness of school, school district, and state-level administrators to improve academic performance and foster post-school success.

The following website provides more information on how *ESEA* and *IDEA* work together to improve the academic performance of students with disabilities:  
<http://www.osepideasthatwork.org/parentkit/NCLBandIDEA.asp>.

In addition, *ESEA* addresses transition services of children and youths, including children and youths with disabilities, from state-operated institutions for neglected or delinquent children and youths to schools and the reentry of youth offenders. An estimated 37 percent of youths in state juvenile corrections facilities are youths with disabilities (Quinn, Rutherford, Leone, Osher, and Poirier, 2005). Specific provisions under 20 U.S.C. §6438 require state agencies to reserve not less than 15 percent and not more than 30 percent of the amount each agency receives under Title I, Part D, Subpart 1 of *ESEA* for any fiscal year to support: projects that facilitate the transition of children and youths from state-operated institutions to schools served by LEAs; or the successful reentry of youth offenders, who are age 20 or younger and have received a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent into postsecondary education or vocational and technical training programs through strategies designed to

expose the youths to, and prepare the youths for, postsecondary education, or vocational and technical training programs such as:

- Preplacement programs that allow adjudicated or incarcerated youths to audit or attend courses on college, university, or community college campuses, or through programs provided in institutional settings;
- Work-site schools in which IHEs and private or public employers partner to create programs to help students make a successful transition to postsecondary education and employment; and
- Essential support services to ensure the success of the youths, such as:
  - Personal, vocational and technical, and academic counseling;
  - Placement services designed to place the youths in a university, college, or junior college program;
  - Information concerning, and assistance in obtaining, available student financial aid;
  - Counseling services; and
  - Job placement services.

**The ADA and Section 504.** The *Americans with Disabilities Act* is a federal civil rights law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability administered by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) but enforced by both DOJ and other agencies. The purposes of the *ADA* are: (1) to provide a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities; (2) to provide clear, strong, consistent, enforceable standards addressing discrimination against individuals with disabilities; (3) to ensure that the federal government plays a central role in enforcing the standards established on behalf of individuals with disabilities; and (4) to invoke the sweep of congressional authority, including the power to enforce the equal protection provisions of the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and to regulate commerce, in order to address the major areas of discrimination faced day-to-day by individuals with disabilities (42 U.S.C. §12101). The *ADA* prohibits disability-based discrimination in employment, state and local government services, transportation, public accommodations and commercial facilities, and telecommunications. With regard to tertiary education provided by public entities such as state colleges and universities, ED enforces Title II of the *ADA*.

Section 504 is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance from ED. Within ED, OCR enforces Section 504 in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance from ED. Recipients of federal financial assistance include public school districts and public and private IHEs. The regulations implementing Section 504 in the context of education institutions appear at 34 C.F.R. §104.

**ADA, Section 504, and Transition Services.** While the *ADA* does not specifically address transition or transition services for youths with disabilities, it does provide broad protections and guarantees equal opportunities for individuals with disabilities in the areas of employment as required under sections 12112–12117 of Title I, public services under sections 12131–12165 of Title II, and public accommodations under sections 12181–12189 of Title III. For students with disabilities, a big factor in preparing for their successful transition from high school to tertiary education and employment, is that they have accurate knowledge about their civil rights under the *ADA* and Section 504.

**Rehabilitation Act.** The *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as amended (*Rehabilitation Act*), is administered by ED's Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). The purposes of the *Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998* (P.L. 102-559) are to:

- 1) Empower individuals with disabilities to maximize employment, economic self-sufficiency, independence, and inclusion and integration into society, through (A) statewide workforce

investment systems implemented in accordance with Title I of the *Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA)* that include, as integral components, comprehensive and coordinated state-of-the-art programs of vocational rehabilitation (VR); (B) independent living centers and services; (C) research; (D) training; (E) demonstration projects; and (F) the guarantee of equal opportunity; and

- 2) Ensure that the federal government plays a leadership role in promoting the employment of individuals with disabilities, especially individuals with significant disabilities, and in assisting states and providers of services in fulfilling the aspirations of such individuals with disabilities for meaningful and gainful employment and independent living [29 U.S.C. §701(b)].

The *Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998* are embedded in Title IV of the *Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA)* to create linkage between state VR programs and workforce investment activities carried out under Title I of *WIA* [29 U.S.C. §720(a)(1)(G)].

The purposes of Title I of the *Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998* (P.L. 105-220) are to assist states in operating statewide comprehensive, coordinated, effective, efficient, and accountable programs of VR. Each VR program is: an integral part of a statewide workforce investment system; and designed to assess, plan, develop, and provide VR services for individuals with disabilities, consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice, so that such individuals may prepare for and engage in gainful employment [29 U.S.C. §720(a)(2)].

***Rehabilitation Act and Transition Services.*** To facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from the receipt of educational services in school to the receipt of VR services, Title I of the *Rehabilitation Act* requires that the VR state plan contain plans, policies, and procedures for coordination between the designated state agency for the VR services program and education officials responsible for the public education of students with disabilities. Specifically, the state VR agency must enter into a formal interagency agreement with the SEA that, at a minimum, provides for:

- Consultation and technical assistance to assist education agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including VR services;
- Transition planning by personnel of the designated state agency and educational agency personnel for students with disabilities that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs under Section 614(d) of *IDEA* (as added by section 101 of Public Law 105-17);
- Roles and responsibilities of each agency, including provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; and
- Procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need the transition services defined at 29 U.S.C. §7(37).

***Workforce Investment Act (WIA).*** Titles I, III, and V of *WIA* are administered by DOL. Titles II and IV of *WIA* are administered by ED.

***WIA and Transition Services.*** Specific provisions related to transition services are cited in the *Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998* as embedded in Title IV of *WIA* (discussed above in more detail) [29 U.S.C. §721(a)(11)(D)]. *WIA* authorizes the use of funds for “workforce investment activity” including youth activity to:

- Provide eligible youths<sup>2</sup> seeking assistance in achieving academic and employment success, effective and comprehensive activities, which shall include a variety of options for improving educational and skill competencies and provide effective connections to employers;
- Ensure ongoing mentoring opportunities for eligible youths with adults committed to providing such opportunities;
- Provide opportunities for training to eligible youths;
- Provide continued supportive services for eligible youths;
- Provide incentives for recognition and achievement to eligible youths; and
- Provide opportunities for eligible youths in activities related to leadership, development, decision making, citizenship, and community service [29 U.S.C. §2854].

**WIA Youth Program.** The *WIA Youth Program* provides paid and unpaid work experience, which increases placements in employment and educational attainments for youths. In doing so, low-income youths will have a greater likelihood of long-term labor market attachment, higher lifetime earnings, and a lower likelihood for support under public assistance programs. Services available to youths include tutoring, alternative secondary school services, summer employment opportunities, occupational training, work experience, leadership development opportunities, mentoring, counseling, supportive services, such as assistance with child care and housing, and follow-up services, such as ongoing career counseling after a youth exits the program. Of the 10 program elements, there is a specific focus on summer employment, with the expectation that the majority of funds will be spent providing subsidized work experiences, between May 1 through Sept. 30, to youths in the public, private for profit, and private not-for-profit sectors. The *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA; Recovery Act)* extends the youth eligibility age from 21 to 24 and provides \$1,200,000,000 in additional funding to states for youth activities, with a specific emphasis on summer employment opportunities for youths. The following website provides more information on *ARRA*: <http://www.dol.gov/recovery/implement.htm>.

**Ticket to Work and Work Incentive Improvement Act (TWWIA).** In late 1999, Congress enacted *TWWIA* (P.L. 106-170). This legislation was designed to remove many of the barriers that previously influenced SSI and SSDI beneficiaries' decisions about going to work, including their concern over losing health-care coverage. The goal of the Ticket Program is to increase opportunities and choices for SSI and SSDI disability beneficiaries to obtain employment, VR, and other support services from public and private providers, employers, and other organizations.

Under the Ticket to Work program, SSA issues a voucher or "ticket" to eligible beneficiaries who may assign it to a participating Employment Network (EN) or state VR agency of their choice. The ENs are qualified private or public entities, which can include state VR agencies, that have entered into an agreement with SSA to provide rehabilitation, employment, or support services to eligible SSDI and SSI disability recipients. State VR agencies have the option of participating in the Ticket to Work program as an EN or remaining in SSA's traditional VR reimbursement system, including the option to elect either payment method on a case-by-case basis.

The ENs have the right to accept or reject tickets based on their assessment of each beneficiary's needs and their ability to help that person. Once an EN accepts a ticket, they work with the ticket holder to put together an individualized work plan which lists the various types of services or supports needed to reach their designated vocational (work) goal. The ENs coordinate and arrange for provision of

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<sup>2</sup> Eligible youths must be ages 14 through 21, be of low-income families, and meet one or more of the following conditions: be deficient in basic literacy skills; be a school dropout; be homeless, runaway, or foster child; be pregnant or a parent; be an offender; or require additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment.



services as well as help the beneficiary find and maintain work. Employment-related services and supports may include, for example, providing VR, counseling, assistive technology, and job coaching. The “ticket” represents SSA’s promise to pay the EN or state VR agency for certain employment-related outcomes.

In 2008, SSA issued new regulations that significantly improved the Ticket to Work program. The new regulations addressed challenges and concerns that had been raised by beneficiaries as well as ENs. The new regulations expanded the choices available to disability beneficiaries who want to enter or re-enter the workforce; encourage more organizations to become ENs by revising their payment system to generate positive returns earlier, more often, and at higher rates; and promote more partnering and coordination of services among all stakeholders. The 2008 Ticket Amendments also established a new business model called Partnership Plus that allows a state VR agency and a separate EN to both receive payments if they provided services to the same ticket holder at different times.

***Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins Act)*** (20 U.S. C. §2301 *et seq.*, as amended by P.L., 109-270). The *Perkins Act* is administered by ED’s Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE). The purpose of the *Perkins Act* is to more fully develop the academic and career and technical skills of secondary and postsecondary students who elect to enroll in career and technical education (CTE) by, among other things, promoting the development of services and activities that link secondary and postsecondary education for career and technical education students. Individuals with disabilities are one of several special populations to whom states and their subgrantees must provide services under the *Perkins Act*.

***Perkins Act and Transition Services.*** Funds made available under the *Perkins Act* may be used to pay for the costs of CTE services required in an IEP developed pursuant to section 614(d) of *IDEA* and services necessary to meet the requirements of Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* with respect to ensuring equal access to CTE (20 U.S.C. §2414 (c)). Additionally, the *Perkins Act* includes students with IEPs or plans under Section 504 as members of “special populations.” Thus, these students are eligible for the programs and services offered to special populations as well as for participation in the programs offered to all CTE students under both the Perkins CTE Basic Grants to States Program and the Perkins Tech Prep Education Program. Each section below describes the linkage between secondary and postsecondary education required in programs offered to all CTE students followed by the requirements related to special populations, including students with disabilities.

#### **Perkins CTE Basic Grants to States**

To be eligible for a Perkins Basic Grant, states and their subgrantees must have approved CTE plans that, among other things, describe the CTE “programs of study,” which will be offered as an option to students (and their parents as appropriate) when planning for, and completing, future course work. The programs of study for CTE content areas:

- Must incorporate secondary education and postsecondary education elements;
- Must include coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant CTE content in a coordinated, nonduplicative progression of courses that align secondary education with postsecondary education to adequately prepare students to succeed in postsecondary education;
- May include the opportunity for secondary education students to participate in dual or concurrent enrollment programs or other ways to acquire postsecondary education credits; and
- Must lead to an industry-recognized credential or certificate at the postsecondary level, or an associate or baccalaureate degree.

Under sections 124(b)(8) and 135(b)(9) of the *Perkins Act*, respectively, states and the local secondary and postsecondary entities that receive assistance from the states must support programs for special populations, including individuals with disabilities, that lead to high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand occupations.

### **Perkins Tech Prep Grants**

The Tech Prep program administered under *the Perkins Act* provides assistance to states to award grants to consortia of secondary and postsecondary entities, such as LEAs and postsecondary education institutions, for the development and operation of programs consisting of the last 2 years of secondary education and at least 2 years of postsecondary education, designed to provide Tech Prep education to all students leading to a technical skill proficiency, an industry-recognized credential, a certificate, or a degree in a specific career field, an associate degree or a 2-year certificate. The program also is designed to strengthen links between secondary and postsecondary schools. As provided in Section 203(c)(2) of the *Perkins Act*, a Tech Prep program means a program of study that, among other things:

- Combines at a minimum 2 years of secondary education (as determined under state law) with a minimum of 2 years of postsecondary education in a nonduplicative, sequential course of study; or an apprenticeship program of not less than 2 years following secondary education instruction;
- Integrates academic and career and technical education instruction, and utilizes work-based and worksite learning experiences where appropriate and available;
- Provides technical preparation in a career field, including high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand occupations;
- Builds student competence in technical skills and in core academic subjects (as defined in Section 9101 of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965*), as appropriate, through applied, contextual, and integrated instruction, in a coherent sequence of courses;
- Leads to technical skill proficiency, an industry recognized credential, a certificate, or a degree, in a specific career field;
- Leads to placement in high-skill or high-wage employment, or to further education; and
- Utilizes career and technical education programs of study, to the extent practicable.

A Tech Prep program must provide equal access, to the full range of technical preparation programs (including pre-apprenticeship programs), to individuals who are members of special populations, including the development of tech prep program services appropriate to the needs of special populations.

**Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA).** This Act amended the *Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA)* which authorizes federal programs to support postsecondary education. Most of the programs authorized by *HEA* are administered by ED's Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE). The purpose of *HEOA* (P.L. 110-315) was to strengthen the programs that support the educational resources of the nation's colleges and universities and to provide financial assistance for students in postsecondary and higher education.

**HEOA and Transition.** A "comprehensive transition and postsecondary program for students with intellectual disabilities" is defined in Section 760 of *HEA* as a degree, certificate, or nondegree program offered by an IHE that is designed to support students with intellectual disabilities who are seeking to continue academic, career and technical, and independent living instruction at an IHE in order to prepare for gainful employment. The program must include an advising and curriculum structure and offer students with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to participate in one or more of the following activities:

- Regular enrollment in credit-bearing courses with nondisabled students offered by the institution.
- Auditing or participating in courses with nondisabled students offered by the institution for which the student does not receive regular academic credit.
- Enrollment in noncredit-bearing, nondegree courses with nondisabled students.
- Participation in internships or work-based training in settings with nondisabled individuals.

Title VII of the *HEA* authorizes the use of competitive grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements for professional development, technical assistance, and research to support the efforts of IHEs to provide students with intellectual disabilities a high-quality postsecondary education. These supports include model demonstration projects to make college course materials more accessible for students with print disabilities [20 U.S.C. §1140a]. Authorized activities for model demonstration grants include the use of methods consistent with the principles of universal design for learning and the development of teaching methods and strategies to provide postsecondary faculty, staff, and administrators with the skills and supports necessary to ensure the successful transition of students with disabilities from secondary school to postsecondary education.

***Assistive Technology Act (ATA)***. The *Assistance Technology Act* is administered by the ED's RSA. The purposes of *ATA*, as amended in 2004 by P.L. 108-364, are to support state efforts to improve the provision of assistive technology to individuals with disabilities through comprehensive statewide programs of technology-related assistance for individuals with disabilities of all ages that are designed to increase:

- The availability of, funding for, access to, provision of, and training about assistive technology devices and assistive technology services;
- The ability of individuals with disabilities of all ages to secure and maintain possession of assistive technology devices as such individuals make the transition between services offered by educational or human service agencies or between settings of daily living (for example, between home and work);
- The capacity of public agencies and private entities to provide and pay for assistive technology devices and assistive technology services on a statewide basis for individuals with disabilities of all ages;
- The involvement of individuals with disabilities and, if appropriate, their family members, guardians, advocates, and authorized representatives, in decisions related to the provision of assistive technology devices and assistive technology services;
- The promotion of coordination among state agencies; between state and local agencies; among local agencies; and between state and local agencies and private entities (such as managed care providers) that are involved or are eligible to be involved in carrying out activities under this Act;
- The awareness and facilitate the change of laws, regulations, policies, practices, procedures, and organizational structures that facilitate the availability, or provision of, assistive technology devices and assistive technology services; and
- The awareness and knowledge of the benefits of assistive technology devices and assistive technology services among targeted individuals and entities and the general population.

Additionally, *ATA* provides states with financial assistance that supports programs designed to maximize the ability of individuals with disabilities and their family members, guardians, advocates, and authorized representatives to obtain assistive technology devices and assistive technology services (29 U.S.C. §3001).

**ATA and Transition Services.** Under Section 4(e)(3)(B)(i)(III) of *ATA*, states are required to provide support to public or private entities to develop and disseminate training materials, conduct training, facilitate access to assistive technology, provide technical assistance, and assist students with disabilities (within the meaning of *IDEA* (20 U.S.C. §1400 *et seq.*) who receive transition services and adults who are individuals with disabilities maintaining or transitioning to community living.

**Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act).** The *DD Act* is administered by the DHHS, Administration for Children and Families. The purpose of the 2000 Act (P.L. 106-402), pursuant to Section 101 of Title I, is to assure that individuals with developmental disabilities and their families participate in the design of, and have access to, needed community services, individualized supports, and other forms of assistance that promote self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in all facets of community life through culturally competent programs (42 U.S.C. §15001).

**DD Act and Transition Services.** While the *DD Act* does not specifically address transition or transition services, the principles promulgated in Section 101(C) mandate that all programs, projects, and activities receiving assistance be carried out such that:

- Individuals with developmental disabilities, including those with the most severe developmental disabilities, are capable of self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in all facets of community life, often requiring the provision of community services, individualized supports, and other forms of assistance.
- Individuals with developmental disabilities and their families have competencies, capabilities, and personal goals that should be recognized, supported, and encouraged; assistance to such individuals should be provided in an individualized manner, consistent with the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, and capabilities of such individuals.
- Individuals with developmental disabilities and their families are the primary decision makers regarding the services and supports that they receive, including living situations and the decision-making policies and programs that affect their lives.
- Services, supports, and other assistance should be provided in a manner that demonstrates respect for individual dignity, personal preferences, and cultural differences.
- Specific efforts must be made to ensure that individuals with developmental disabilities from racial and ethnic minority backgrounds and their families enjoy increased and meaningful opportunities to access and use community services, individualized supports, and other forms of assistance available to other individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.
- Recruitment efforts in disciplines related to developmental disabilities relating to preservice training, community training, practice, administration, and policymaking must focus on bringing larger numbers of racial and ethnic minorities into the disciplines in order to provide appropriate skills, knowledge, role models, and sufficient personnel to address the growing needs of an increasingly diverse population.
- With education and support, communities can be accessible to and responsive to the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families and are enriched by full and active participation in community activities, and contributions, by individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.
- Individuals with developmental disabilities have access to opportunities, and the necessary support to be included in community life, have interdependent relationships, live in homes and communities, and make contributions to their families, communities, states, and the nation.
- Efforts undertaken to maintain or expand community-based living options for individuals with disabilities should be monitored in order to determine and report to appropriate individuals and

entities, the extent of access by individuals with developmental disabilities to those options and the extent of compliance by entities providing those options with quality assurance standards.

- Families of children with developmental disabilities need to have access to, and use of, safe and appropriate child care and before-school and after-school programs, in the most integrated settings, in order to enrich the participation of the children in community life.
- Individuals with developmental disabilities need to have access to, and use of, public transportation, in order to be independent and to directly contribute to and participate in all facets of community life.
- Individuals with developmental disabilities need to have access to, and use of, recreational, leisure, and social opportunities in the most integrated settings, in order to enrich their participation in community life.

***Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)***. The *FLSA* is administered by DOL. The purposes of the 1938 *FLSA* include the provision of fair labor standards in employment that affects interstate commerce. Pursuant to Section 202, congressional declaration of policy was established to correct and as rapidly as practicable to eliminate labor conditions detrimental to the maintenance of the minimum standard of living necessary for health, efficiency, and general well-being of workers (29 U.S.C. §202). The *FLSA* establishes minimum wage, overtime pay, recordkeeping, and youth employment standards affecting employees in the private sector and in federal, state, and local governments.

***FLSA and Transition***. The *FLSA* does not specifically address transition, but rather provisions under the law, also known as the child labor laws, to ensure that when young people work, the work is safe and does not jeopardize their health, well-being, or educational opportunities (29 U.S.C. §212). However, *YouthRules!* was launched by DOL in 2002 to increase public awareness of federal and state rules concerning young workers. Through the *YouthRules* initiative, DOL and its partners seek to promote positive and safe work experiences that help prepare young workers to enter the 21st-century workforce. The following website provides further information about *YouthRules!*: <http://www.youthrules.dol.gov>.

In addition, to promote vocational training, DOL and ED developed criteria clarifying the differences between appropriate nonpaid work experiences (i.e., internships, job shadowing) and paid work experiences. Appropriate nonpaid work experiences may occur as part of the career exploration, career assessment, and work-related training components of work-based learning programs. The following website provides more information about the implementation of these programs according to the *FLSA*: <http://www.dol.gov/elaws/esa/flsa/14c/2c2.htm>.

## CHAPTER 5. EDUCATION FINANCING, INCLUDING TRANSITION STUDENTS

Chapter 5 presents a summary of national funding for the education and transition to tertiary education and employment of individuals with disabilities in the United States. It also provides information about relevant funding directed to support all students, including students with disabilities.

### The Federal Role in Education

Education is primarily a state and local responsibility in the United States. States and communities, as well as public and private organizations, establish schools and colleges, develop curricula, and determine requirements for enrollment and graduation. The structure of education finance in America reflects this predominant state and local role. Of an estimated \$1 trillion being spent nationwide on education at all levels for school year 2009–10, a substantial majority will come from state, local, and private sources. This is especially true at the elementary and secondary level, where just over 89.5 percent of the funds will come from nonfederal sources. That means the federal contribution to elementary and secondary education is a little under 10.5 percent, which includes funds not only from ED but also from other federal agencies, such as DHHS' Head Start program and the Department of Agriculture's National School Lunch program.

Because ED's share of total education funding in the U.S. is relatively small, ED must carefully target its funds where they can do the most good to ensure the maximum effect. This targeting reflects the historical development of the federal role in education as a kind of "emergency response system," a means of filling gaps in state and local support for education when critical national needs arise. The following website provides more information on federal funding in education: <http://www.ed.gov/about/overview/fed/role.html>. In addition, recipients and sub-recipients of federal financial assistance must comply with all applicable civil rights obligations, including the prohibition of disability discrimination under Section 504. The following website provides more information on these civil rights obligations: <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/notices/civil-rights.html>.

### National Funding for Education and Transition to Tertiary Education and Employment

**Sources of Funding.** Most of the funding for state and local transition programs that serve youths with disabilities are authorized by *IDEA*, Title I of *WIA*, and the *Rehabilitation Act*. Because these three laws provide funding from separate federal agencies, the states have various structures for providing transition and related services (Timmons, 2007).

**Federal Spending on Education.** On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed Public Law 111-5, the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)*. Initial funds for the following programs were released to states that submitted the certification required by Section 1607(a) of *ARRA*:

- *ESEA* Title I Grants to LEAs;
- *IDEA* parts B (Assistance for Education of all Children with Disabilities) and C (Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities);
- *Rehabilitation Act* State Grants;
- Independent Living State Grants; and
- Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind.

The following website provides information about *ARRA* funding for the various programs within ED: <http://www.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/news.html>.

**Table 1** below summarizes fiscal year 2010 appropriations for programs that play a role in the transition of youths with and without disabilities from secondary to tertiary education and employment, including the provision of technical assistance, research, transition services, personnel preparation, and student aid. Programs within the Department's OSERS, IES, OPE, and the Department of Labor are included. Although these programs address transition needs of students with disabilities, it is not clear how much of the funding directly impacts students with disabilities.

**Table 1. Summary of Appropriations for Programs That Incorporate Transition, Technical Assistance, Research, Personnel Preparation, Services or Financial Aid, by Departmental Office and Program**

Department, Office, and Program	Fiscal Year 2010 Appropriation
<b>U.S. Department of Education</b>	
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS)	
Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)	
Grants to states ( <i>IDEA</i> Section 611)	\$11.5 billion
Special Education, Technical Assistance and Dissemination ( <i>IDEA</i> Section 663)	\$49.5 million
Special Education, Personnel Preparation ( <i>IDEA</i> Section 662)	\$90.7 million
Special Education, Parent Information Centers ( <i>IDEA</i> sections 671–673)	\$28.0 million
State Personnel Development Grants ( <i>IDEA</i> Subpart I)	\$48.0 million
Special Education, Technology and Media Services ( <i>IDEA</i> Section 674)	\$44.0 million
Special Olympics Education Program ( <i>Special Olympics Sport and Empowerment Act</i> )	\$8.1 million
Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA)	
Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants ( <i>Rehabilitation Act</i> Title I-A, sections 110 and 111)	\$3.1 billion
VR Client Assistance State Grants ( <i>Rehabilitation Act</i> Section 112)	\$12.3 million
VR Training ( <i>Rehabilitation Act</i> Section 302)	\$37.8 million

**Table 1. Summary of Appropriations for Programs That Incorporate Transition, Technical Assistance, Research, Personnel Preparation, Services or Financial Aid, by Departmental Office and Program (continued)**

Department, Office, and Program	Fiscal Year 2010 Appropriation
VR Demonstration and Training Programs ( <i>Rehabilitation Act</i> Section 303)	\$6.5 million
VR Supported Employment State Grants ( <i>Rehabilitation Act</i> VI-B)	\$29.2 million
National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) ( <i>Rehabilitation Act</i> II)	\$109.2 million
Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE)	
Higher Education Programs, Demonstration Projects for Students With Disabilities ( <i>HEA</i> , VII-D-1)	\$6.8 million
Higher Education Programs, Federal TRIO ( <i>HEA</i> IV-A-2, Chapter 1)	\$853.1 million
Federal Student Aid	
Higher Education Programs, Federal Work Study ( <i>HEA</i> IV-C)	\$980.5 million
Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE)	
Career and Technical Education State Grants-Annual appropriation and advance for succeeding fiscal year ( <i>Career and Technical Education Act</i> Title I)	\$1.2 billion
Adult Education ( <i>Adult Education and Family Literacy Act</i> and <i>WIA</i> Section 503)	\$628.2 million
Tech Prep Education Programs (Title II)	\$102.9 million
Institute of Education Sciences (IES)	
Special Education, Research in Special Education (ESRA I)	\$71.1 million
Special Education, Studies and Evaluations ( <i>IDEA</i> , Section 664)	\$11.5 million
<b>Department of Labor (DOL)</b>	
Employment and Training Administration	
Youth Activities Program	\$924.1 million
Job Corps Program	\$1.71 billion
Office of Disability Employment Policy	\$39.0 million

Source: The following websites provide further information about the fiscal year 2010 appropriations for Education and fiscal years 2002–11 appropriations for Labor:

<http://www.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget10/10action.pdf> and

<http://www.dol.gov/dol/budget/2011/PDF/CBJ-2011-V1-02.pdf>, respectively.

### Projects Funded by Federal Agencies

A number of projects in table 1 funded by federal agencies support transition services. While not exhaustive of all federally funded projects, a transition resource directory concerning technical assistance centers entitled *Strengthening Transition Partnership: Building Federal TA Center Capacity* (September 2009) can be found at: <http://ruralinstitute.umt.edu/transition/Articles/TransitionResourceDirectory.pdf>.



### **Existing Aid and Eligibility for Students, Institutions, and Families to Access Tertiary Education**

Federal Student Aid, an office of ED, plays a central role in the nation's postsecondary education community. Federal Student Aid's core mission is to ensure that all eligible individuals, including students with disabilities, benefit from federal financial assistance—loans, grants, and work study—for education beyond high school. The programs administered comprise the nation's largest source of student aid. Every year, they provide more than \$83 billion in aid to nearly 14 million postsecondary students and their families. There are three types of federal student aid:

- Grants—financial aid that doesn't have to be repaid;
- Work-Study—a program that allows students to earn money for their education; and
- Loans—aid that allows students to borrow money for their education; loans must be repaid with interest.

The following website provides information about the three types of student aid: [http://studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/student\\_guide/index.html](http://studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/student_guide/index.html).

### **Grants**

- *Federal Pell Grants* are the foundation of federal student financial aid, to which aid from other federal and nonfederal sources might be added. The amount of the grant depends on cost of attendance, expected family contribution, enrollment status (full- or part-time) and length of attendance.
- *Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants* are awarded to undergraduate students with exceptional financial need.
- *Academic Competitiveness Grants* are for undergraduate students who are enrolled in the first or second year of an eligible program in any field, who have completed a rigorous secondary school program of study, and who also have at least a 3.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA) for the second year in tertiary education.
- *National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grants (National SMART Grants)* are for undergraduate students who are enrolled in the third, fourth, or fifth year of an eligible program, eligible for a Pell Grant, enrolled at least half-time, and pursuing an eligible major with at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA. A student does not have to complete a rigorous secondary school program of study to be eligible for this grant.
- *Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grants* provide assistance to undergraduate and graduate students who are completing or who plan to complete course work needed to begin a career in teaching in public or private elementary or secondary school serving students from low-income families.
- *Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grants* are for students who are not eligible for Pell Grants and whose parent or guardian was a member of the U.S. Armed Forces and died as a result of service performed in Iraq or Afghanistan after Sept. 11. The student must be under 24 years old or enrolled in college at least part-time at the time of the parent's or guardian's death.

### **Federal Work-Study (FWS) Program**

This Program:

- Provides part-time employment while students are enrolled in school;
- Helps pay education expenses;
- Is available to undergraduate and graduate students;
- Is available to full- or part-time students;
- Is administered by schools participating in the FWS Program; and
- Encourages community service work and work related to course of study.

## Student Loans

There are different types of federal student loans.

- *Federal Perkins Loans* are made through participating schools to undergraduate, graduate and professional degree students and are offered to students who demonstrate financial need.
- *Stafford Loans*<sup>3</sup> are for undergraduate, graduate, and professional degree students. Students must be enrolled at least half-time to receive these loans.
- *PLUS Loans* are loans parents can obtain to help pay the cost of education for their dependent undergraduate children. In addition, graduate and professional degree students may obtain PLUS Loans to help pay for their own education
- *Consolidation Loans* allow student or parent borrowers to combine multiple federal education loans into one loan with one monthly payment.
- *William D. Ford Federal Direct Loans* provide eligible students and parents to borrow directly from ED at participating schools; and
- The *Federal Family Education Loan Program* provides funds from private lenders that are guaranteed by the federal government

The guide, *Funding Education Beyond High School: The Guide to Federal Student Aid*, provides further details about the grant, student loan, and work-study opportunities and eligibility requirements and is available online:

[http://studentaid.ed.gov/students/attachments/siteresources/FundingEduBeyondHighSchool\\_0910.pdf](http://studentaid.ed.gov/students/attachments/siteresources/FundingEduBeyondHighSchool_0910.pdf).

***Within-state Supports and Corporate Scholarships.*** Nearly all states offer financial assistance in the form of state grants and loans. Details and information about these scholarships are typically obtained from a college financial aid office or a high school guidance counselor. Scholarships are gifts and awards that are based on a student's academic achievement, background, or other criteria. Disability-specific scholarships are quite limited. Many businesses also offer financial aid, tuition reimbursement, or scholarships for employee's children. Examples of within-state supports and corporate scholarships include the following:

- *Bank of America Abilities Scholarship Program.* This program awards scholarships to students with disabilities (including learning disabilities) who have a career interest in finance, business or computer science, and a GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.
- *Anne Ford Scholarship.* The Anne Ford Scholarship is awarded by the National Center for Learning Disabilities to a high school senior with a learning disability who can act as a role model for others who are faced with learning disabilities and who has the potential of contributing to society in a way that increases opportunities for all people with learning disabilities.
- *Yes I Can! Foundation for Exceptional Children.* The Foundation for Exceptional Children offers the Stanley E. Jackson Scholarships and Sara Conlon Memorial Scholarship for first-year college students.
- *Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic and Learning Through Listening.* This program provides three scholarships each year for high school seniors who are learning disabled. The award is based on academic achievement, leadership, enterprise, and service to others. Financial need is not a factor.

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<sup>3</sup> The Stafford, Plus, and Consolidation loans are subsets of the Direct Loan and Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) programs. Beginning on July 1, 2010, the FFEL program ceases making new loans, and all loans will be made through Direct Loans.

Note: A variety of scholarships are available to the blind and visually impaired; the following website provides more information on the available scholarships:  
<http://www.collegescholarships.org/scholarships/blind.htm>.

## CHAPTER 6. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK SUPPORTING TRANSITION

Chapter 6 describes the existing systems related to education, vocational training, lifelong education (including service implementation and plans) employment, and health care in the United States.

### Education

**Community Colleges.** In the United States, community college programs often lead to a license, a certificate, or an Associate of Arts or Science degree. These institutions are public, 2-year colleges that typically serve people in the surrounding communities and offer academic, technical, and continuing-education courses. They often operate under an open admissions<sup>4</sup> policy, but admissions requirements may vary. Some community colleges also offer programs for individuals with cognitive disabilities, autism, and other disabilities, that focus on developing functional and employment skills. Community colleges play important roles in the One-Stop Career Centers system created by *WIA*, through which a variety of federally funded employment and training programs provide services. About 45 percent of the community colleges visited by GAO in their May 2008 study integrate with their local One-Stop centers. Specifically, GAO examined (1) how community colleges meet the workforce training needs of their communities; (2) what community colleges do to integrate with the nation's one-stop system; (3) the conditions or practices that enhance or impede these efforts; and (4) the actions Labor and Education have taken to encourage linkages between community colleges and the workforce investment system, including One-Stops. The following website provides more information about GAO's study: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d08547.pdf>.

Community colleges are key providers of career and technical training as well as of traditional academic education. Research indicates 2-year institutions tend to offer more varied and specialized services that focus on serving students with disabilities; these programs educate and train students with a wider variety of disabilities, and provide stronger community linkages than 4-year institutions. However, 2-year colleges often coordinate with 4-year colleges or universities, so that course credits are accepted when transferring into a 4-year program. The following website provides more information about community colleges: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/cclo/index.html>.

**Four-year colleges and universities.** Four-year college programs offer a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degrees. Some also offer graduate and professional degrees. Specific information related to tertiary support services for students with disabilities may be found in chapter 7, Support Structures, specifically under Tertiary Support Services.

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<sup>4</sup> A policy that permits enrollment of a student in a college or university without regard to academic qualifications.

## Vocational Training

**Trade and Technical Colleges.** Programs in trade and technical colleges are designed to prepare students for gainful employment in recognized occupations. Such occupations, for example, include air conditioning technician, bank teller, dental assistant, data processor, electrician, medical secretary, surveyor, and welder. Vocational training is provided so that an individual can obtain skills in a specific area of interest or increase the level of skills he or she has already achieved. A course of study may take anywhere from 2 weeks to 2 years to complete, with the general entrance requirement of a high school diploma or a General Educational Development (GED) certificate.

Trade and technical colleges offer a variety of options, including associate degrees, certificates, and work apprenticeships. Associate degree programs prepare students for technical occupations (e.g., accounting, dental hygienist, computer programmer). Technical diploma programs meet the needs of businesses and industry, and provide employees with required certification for employment (e.g., automotive maintenance, accounting assistant, information technology, carpenter's assistant, and pharmacy technician). Apprenticeships are typically geared toward those interested in working in industrial or service trades (e.g., carpentry, plumbing, machinery). The National Research Center for Career and Technical Education funded by OVAE provides further information about the variety of tertiary education opportunities at: <http://www.nccte.org>.

## Employment: Workforce Development Systems

An agreed upon definition of what is meant by the term “workforce development system” is still evolving. Today, a broad array of entities at the national, state, and local levels exist with diverse responsibilities for planning, funding, administering, and operating programs to assist individuals with and without disabilities to obtain education, training, job placement, and support services (Wills and Luecking, 2003).

State and local workforce development services support both out-of-school youths, as well as those at-risk of dropping out. Employment services assist youths with disabilities who are trying to obtain a job, or obtain the job skills necessary, to increase their potential wages. Services for youths in either situation can include job coaching and training, and direct placement with an employer. Support services assist youths with disabilities in pursuing their education and employment goals as well as achieving goals for independent living. These services may include mentoring and counseling, child care, and transportation, as well as any other services that might be needed. These programs assist youths with disabilities in entering competitive and supported employment options. The following website provides more information on integrated work settings: <http://www.dol.gov/odep/archives/fact/supportd.htm>.

### **Workforce Recruitment Program for College Students With Disabilities (WRP).**

The Workforce Recruitment Program is cosponsored by DOL's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) and the Department of Defense with support from other federal agencies. WRP is a resource to connect public and private sector employers nationwide with highly motivated tertiary education students and recent graduates with disabilities who are eager to prove their abilities in the workforce. Employers seek to fill both temporary and permanent positions in a variety of fields. Please see the ODEP website for further information about WRP at: <http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/brochures/wrp1.html>.

## Lifelong Education and Support

**VR System Framework.** State VR programs provide a wide range of services to help support eligible individuals with disabilities in tertiary education and employment. The types of VR services available to eligible individuals may include, but are not limited to: counseling and guidance; work-readiness training; work adjustment training; college and university instruction; on-the-job training; vocational

and technical training; supported employment; school-to-work transition; job coaching; physical and mental restoration services; assistive technology; and referral to other agencies, if needed.

Under the VR program, individuals with a physical or mental impairment that results in a substantial impediment to employment, who can benefit in terms of an employment outcome from VR services, and who require VR services are eligible for services. However, priority must be given to individuals with the most significant disabilities if a VR program cannot serve all eligible individuals in the state. Several provisions of the *Rehabilitation Act* address coordination with high schools in order to improve transition from school to post-school activities for students who are eligible to receive VR services.

During the transition process, the SEAs and the state VR agencies work to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from services needed for school activities under an IEP to the services needed to achieve an employment outcome under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). State VR agencies are encouraged to get involved with students with disabilities as early as possible, but an IPE should be developed for eligible individuals by the time the student graduates from high school. Developing an IPE that is aligned closely with the IEP is intended to provide seamless continuity of service delivery for students who will need VR services in order to complete the transition services initiated by secondary public school systems. This coordination must be an integral part of the counselor's planning for transition services. This early involvement in planning for services will help students, their families, and school districts design services to optimize the student's final years in school to prepare for full inclusion and integration into society, employment, independent living, and economic and social self-sufficiency.

Collaboration in assessing student progress and participation in planning, which includes the student, family, and school, should result in consensus about desired outcomes, goals, and services that must be reflected in both planning documents: the IEP and IPE. The IPE should be developed, to the extent possible, during the annual review of the transition IEP. At that time, information required on the IPE will reflect the content of the IEP, including vocational goals, educational and rehabilitation objectives, projected dates, and responsibilities for the participation in the transition process.

**SSA System Framework.** SSA administers the SSDI and SSI disability benefit programs that provide benefits to disabled adults who are unable to do substantial gainful work and have a severe mental and/or physical disability that is expected to last for a minimum of 12 months or result in death. The SSI program also provides means-tested benefits to children in low-income families who have severe functional limitations due to a mental and/or physical disability. Entitlement to SSI benefits results in automatic entitlement to Medicaid health-care coverage in most states. However, most SSDI beneficiaries must serve a 24-month waiting period before receiving Medicare health benefits.

To provide incentives for young people to enter the workforce, SSA developed several types of work incentives to help disability beneficiaries gain employment.

- A Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS) helps SSI recipients make the transition to tertiary education and employment, or start their own business. A PASS allows SSI recipients to use income received from work or other sources, except their SSI benefits, to achieve employment goals. For example, a young high school graduate could get a job and set aside part (or all) of his or her earnings and any SSDI benefits received to go to school, get specialized training for getting a job, or starting a business. The job (or business) in which the individual is interested should allow him or her to earn enough to reduce or eliminate the need for benefits. Three requirements are needed to qualify for a PASS plan: (1) a desire to work; (2) a current receipt of SSI or qualification for SSI based on disability or blindness; and (3) an income (other than

SSI benefits) or resources to get a job or start a business. The following website provides more information: <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityresearch/wi/pass.htm#passlinks>.

Under normal SSI rules, income from other sources can reduce or eliminate SSI benefits. However, with an approved PASS plan, any money (other than SSI benefits) that is set aside or used toward reaching an approved employment goal cannot be counted when figuring the recipient's SSI monthly payment amount. The money set aside can be used for transportation to and from work; tuition, books, fees, and supplies needed for school or training; child care; attendant care; employment services, such as job coaching and resume writing; supplies to start a business; equipment and tools to do the job; or uniforms, special clothing, and safety equipment. While the approved PASS plan is in effect, an SSA coordinator or specialist will stay in contact with the SSI recipient to make sure the plan is being followed and goals are being met.

- Another work incentive called the student earned income exclusion also allows SSI disability recipients, who are under age 22 and regularly attending school, to exclude earnings from income. "Regularly attending school" means that the person takes one or more courses of study and attends classes in:
  - A college or university for at least eight hours a week; or
  - Grades 7–12 for at least 12 hours a week; or
  - A training course to prepare for employment for at least 12 hours a week (or 15 hours weekly if the course involves shop practice); or
  - A homeschool situation for at least 12 hours per week and in accordance with the applicable home school laws; or for less than the above for reasons beyond the student's control, e.g., due to ill health.

Beginning January 2009, the student earned income exclusion increased to \$1,640 monthly. The maximum yearly exclusion is \$6,600. SSA also has work incentives in place to address SSA disability beneficiaries' major concern about returning to work and the loss of health-care coverage. SSDI disability recipients whose benefits stop because of their work and earnings can still be eligible for free Medicare hospital insurance and Medicare supplementary medical insurance (when premiums are paid) for up to 93 months after their 9-month trial work period. SSI recipients who have earnings too high for an SSI cash payment may still be eligible for Medicaid if they are still disabled and meet certain other requirements. SSA uses a threshold amount to measure whether a person's earnings are high enough to replace his or her SSI and Medicaid benefits. This threshold is based on the amount of earnings that would cause SSI cash payments to stop in the person's state and average Medicaid expenses in that state. The following websites provide more information: <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10095.pdf> and <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityresearch/wi/1619b.htm>.

There are many other types of work incentives available (e.g., exclusion of impairment related work expenses from about of wages earned, expedited reinstatement of benefits when earnings fall below certain levels, etc.). Please see the following website for more information: <http://www.ssa.gov/redbook/eng/redbook.pdf>.

Over the past 20 years, SSA has conducted several youth transition-related demonstration projects. The Youth Transition Demonstration (YTD) projects are designed to provide various services and supports to assist youths with disabilities make critical decisions about education and employment planning at an earlier age. The YTD also includes waivers of SSA program rules to encourage SSI study participants to work.

**Independent Living Services System.** Independent living services are provided through a system of Centers for Independent Living (CILs) within each state and directly by the state VR agency in some states. The CILs are not-for-profit, consumer-controlled, cross-disability, community-based, nonresidential programs designed to promote independent living for individuals with significant disabilities. They are directed and staffed by people who either have a disability or expertise in a broad cross-section of disabilities. All CILs provide a set of core services, including peer counseling, independent living skills training, information and referral services, and individual and systems advocacy. The centers provide services to individuals with significant disabilities, as well as the families of those individuals, and work to increase the availability and improve the quality of community-based programs that serve individuals with significant disabilities. The following website provides more information about the CILs: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/cil/index.html>.

### **Programs That Promote Articulation Between Education, Health Services, and Employment**

Most states are developing systems of educational opportunities for both secondary education students and youths that rely on formal or informal articulation between education, employment and training, human services, and health services. These systems engage high schools, career centers, community colleges, 4-year colleges and universities, and state technical colleges, and combine federal, state, and local funds. Additional, integrated programs and supportive services include guidance and placement services, special needs services, Tech Prep programs, GED services, adult education and literacy programs, and veterans' education and training. The development of these systems typically includes stages such as: (1) industry validation of career clusters and pathway skills; (2) statewide industry advisory councils; (3) technical assistance and personnel training; and (4) evaluation and follow-up.

**Articulation Between Secondary and Postsecondary Systems.** Secondary-Postsecondary Learning Options (SPLOs) are schools and programs that link secondary education with 2- and 4-year IHEs, and allow high school students to participate in college-level courses for credit and not for credit. While many states have some state framework to support SPLOs, many SPLOs have grown as a result of flexible local policies. Approximately 40 states have some state legislation or regulations that sanction or govern dual enrollment or the operation of SPLOs. While many of these policies do not specifically address funding, most provide a framework for the organization of programs and student eligibility requirements (Lerner and Brand, 2006).

An extensive literature review was conducted to identify research, evaluations, and studies on SPLOs, particularly those that specifically targeted underserved and disadvantaged populations that have undergone a program evaluation. Twenty-two programs were identified and have been categorized by program type described below (Lerner and Brand, 2006):

- **Dual Enrollment.** Dual enrollment includes programs that provide opportunities for high school students to participate in college-level course work in order to possibly earn tertiary credit. Programs are offered both on campuses of colleges or universities, or in high school classrooms. Within this compendium, the dual enrollment section includes institution-specific dual enrollment programs, Advanced Placement (AP), and statewide dual enrollment programs with an emphasis on implementation at one site.
- **Perkins CTE Basic Grants.** The Perkins CTE program requires programs of study that incorporate secondary and postsecondary elements and may include the opportunity for secondary education students to participate in dual or concurrent enrollment programs or other ways to acquire postsecondary education credits.
- **Tech Prep.** Tech Prep is a planned sequence of study in a technical field that typically provides students the opportunity to earn tertiary credit toward a technical credential, certificate, or a



degree in a specific career field. Tech Prep is funded under the *Perkins Act* through federal grants to states.

- ***Middle and Early College High Schools.*** Both middle and early college high schools are located on, or near a campus of, a tertiary education institution. Both types of schools supplement their course offerings by enrolling students in college courses for both secondary and tertiary credit. Middle college high schools graduate students with a high school diploma and some tertiary credit; early college high schools encourage students to remain for a fifth year to graduate with both a high school diploma and an associate degree.
- ***Programs Serving Disadvantaged Youths.*** A number of SPLOs target out-of-school or disadvantaged youths and provide an opportunity for them to participate in challenging, college-level course work with appropriate support. Most of these programs are designed and operated by community colleges or community-based organizations in partnership with an institution of tertiary education.
- ***College Access Programs.*** A number of programs focused on college access also provide an opportunity for high school students to enroll in tertiary course work. Enhanced comprehensive programs—college course work coupled with guidance and support to ensure students’ success in tertiary education are the most intensive of these categories, as they prepare students both academically and social-emotionally for college course work and expectations. These programs typically encompass a student’s entire high school curriculum and offer a variety of courses for either high school, college credit, or both. Many of the classes are prerequisites preparing students for college-level academics. These programs include both academic course work and support services, such as counseling, academic assistance and tutoring, and mentoring through the college application and financial aid processes. The most common example of enhanced comprehensive programs is the middle college high school, which is specifically designed to serve low-achieving students with the academic potential to succeed in tertiary education.

**K-16, P-16, P-20 Councils.** Local communities and states are trying to create a “seamless system of education” in which all levels of education—preschool through college—educate as one system instead of several. These efforts most commonly are named K-16, P-16 or P-20 councils. The goal is to create a system of education that links and coordinates each education level into a seamless system fundamentally guided by the principle that success in college begins in prekindergarten. Although these education systems are similar in nature, there are some notable differences:

- A K-16 system integrates a student’s education from kindergarten through a 4-year college degree.
- A P-16 system integrates a student’s education beginning in preschool (as early as 3 years old) through a 4-year college degree.
- A P-20 system expands the P-16 system to include graduate school education.

Note: The following website, developed by the Education Commission of the States, provides more information on the P-16/20 efforts in states: [http://www.ecs.org/html/educationissues/HighSchool/highschooldb1\\_intro.asp?topic=p-20](http://www.ecs.org/html/educationissues/HighSchool/highschooldb1_intro.asp?topic=p-20).

### **Curriculum Development Work Designed to Enhance Educational Organization, Materials, Teaching Methods**

There are several curriculum development initiatives designed to enhance educational organization, materials, teaching methods, or other supports for children and students with disabilities or learning difficulties. Furthermore, transition services and provisions are coming into alignment with the general education curriculum and standards-based education. In addition, for well over 20 years there has been an

effort to identify the competencies needed in the workplace. The shift in the programs of study has necessitated a reconsideration of what can, or should be, included in the high school curriculum, and what should be moved into postsecondary education and training programs as a part of career pathway continuums.

**Aligning Career and Academic Curricula.** Separate tracks for academic and vocational preparation have long defined the structure of high schools. Until recently much of this debate has been based on the assumption that a work-preparation focus was only necessary for those not going on to postsecondary education. However, shifts in the skill requirements in the employment sector, as well as the now accepted dual goals of academic- and work-readiness for high schools, are challenging traditional assumptions. State educational leaders and professional organizations advocate multiple pathways for the purpose of blending the two tracks.

Most states are developing systems of educational opportunities (or pathways) that include both academic and career-centered paths of study. These pathways typically include the following elements: calibrated sequence of academic courses, programs housed in various settings, restructured and flexible course work, flexible time and support personalized learning environments, integrated curriculum that embeds academic concepts in real world contexts, and choice of pathway (Lerner and Brand, 2006).

Career and technical education is an essential component of the overall educational system, combining academic skills with career-technical skills into programs that lead toward an employment certification or prepare students for tertiary education. Career and technical education courses are aligned with career clusters. Career clusters are groupings of occupations and career specialties used as an organizing tool for curriculum design and instruction. Occupations/career specialties are grouped into the career clusters based on the fact that they require a set of common knowledge and skills for career success. (See <http://www.careerclusters.org> for more information.)

**Application of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to Transition Curriculum.** UDL,<sup>5</sup> a concept that emerged from the field of architecture, is an approach to designing curriculum and learning environments for maximum usability by a diverse population. Ramped entrances and automatic doors are architectural examples of Universal Design. In education settings, “universal design” means that environments and curricula are designed to be flexible and useable by students of widely varying abilities. Universal design provides a way to offer flexible curriculum, assessments, and learning environments so that students with widely varying abilities all have the opportunity to access the general curriculum (and assessments) and achieve the academic content standards that have been established for all students in the school. The following website provides more information regarding UDL: <http://www.cast.org>.

In order for students with disabilities to have meaningful access to the general curriculum, transition planning and services have been recently recommended as an important component of universally designed learning environments. To meet the criteria of “flexible and widely usable curricula and environments,” UDL applied to transition must: (1) recognize different pathways to graduation for students that vary by level of support, type and emphasis of curriculum, type of assessments, and expected post-school goals; (2) recognize the central role of student participation (self-determination)

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<sup>5</sup> Under the *Higher Education Act (HEA)*, “The term ‘universal design for learning’ means a scientifically valid framework for guiding educational practice that (a) provides flexibility in the ways information is presented, in the ways students respond or demonstrate knowledge and skills, and in the ways students are engaged and (b) reduces barriers in instruction, provides appropriate accommodations, supports, and challenges, and maintains high achievement expectations for all students, including students with disabilities and students who are limited English proficient” [*HEA*, §103(a) (24)].

in the decision-making process; (3) incorporate the concept of integrated transition planning and participation in a general education course of study; and (4) recognize the need for flexible combinations of academic, career-vocational classes, and community-based work experiences to achieve different pathways to graduation (Kochhar-Bryant, 2008).

**Upgrading and Aligning Industry Standards.** The secretary of labor's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) was asked to examine the demands of the workplace and whether today's young people are capable of meeting those demands. Specifically, the Commission was directed to advise the secretary on the level of skills required to enter employment. In carrying out this charge, the Commission was asked to:

- Define the skills needed for employment;
- Propose acceptable levels of proficiency;
- Suggest effective ways to assess proficiency; and
- Develop a dissemination strategy for the nation's schools, businesses, and homes.

The report (available at: <http://wdr.doleta.gov/SCANS/whatwork/whatwork.pdf>) presents results from the Commission's discussions and meetings with business owners, public employers, unions, and workers and supervisors in shops, plants, and stores. It builds on the work of six special panels established by the Commission to examine all manner of jobs from manufacturing to government employment. Researchers also were commissioned to conduct lengthy interviews with workers in a wide range of jobs.

**Self-Determination Curriculum.** A great deal of curriculum development work has occurred in the past two decades to promote student self-determination and engagement in individualized planning for transition to tertiary settings. Self-determination curricula assists students to define and achieve goals that are important to them. Examples of these curricula include the following:

- **Steps to Self-Determination.** This curriculum contains strategies and materials that promote knowledge, skills, and values that lead to self-determination.
- **Next S.T.E.P.** (Student Transition and Educational Planning). This curriculum is designed to teach students transition planning skills and the skills they need to successfully engage in the process. The curriculum contains 16 lessons, with four units titled: (1) Getting Started, which introduces transition planning and motivates student involvement; (2) Self-Exploration and Self-Evaluation, which includes activities that help students identify their interests, strengths, and weaknesses in adult-oriented outcome areas; (3) Developing Goals and Activities, which helps students identify their hopes and dreams and related goals; and (4) Putting a Plan into Place, which teaches students skills to help them prepare for their transition planning meeting.
- **The ChoiceMaker Self-Determination Transition Curriculum.** This work is targeted to help students acquire the knowledge and skills that will give them a stronger voice in the IEP planning process.
- **Whose Future Is It Anyway?** This Student-Directed Transition Planning Program consists of 36 sessions that introduce the concept of transition and transition planning, using student-directed materials and instruction. A common element of these self-determination curricula is that they offer teachers ways to develop in youths with disabilities the skills needed to take a leadership role in their IEP transition planning meeting. The following website provides more information about self-determination and curricular resources: <http://www.ncset.org/publications/viewdesc.asp?id=962>.

## Mechanisms for Improving Quality of Provisions

The key mechanisms for improving the quality of provisions include: the establishment of performance goals, indicators, and standards for service provision; technical assistance, information dissemination, and capacity-building for SEAs and LEAs; parent training and assistance; research for the development of effective practice; and personnel development. See chapters 7 and 8 for a detailed discussion of support services and training, respectively. The following website provides more information on the key mechanisms for improving the quality of provisions: <http://ruralinstitute.umt.edu/transition/Articles/TransitionResourceDirectory.pdf>.

**Federal and State Monitoring Activities.** The secretary of education is directed by Congress to monitor states and to require each state to monitor their LEAs, including the use of on-site monitoring visits and student file reviews, to enforce the requirements of *IDEA*. Under *IDEA*, the primary focus of federal and state monitoring activities described in Section 616(a) is improving educational results and functional outcomes for children with disabilities and ensuring that states meet the program requirements, using quantifiable indicators in certain priority areas, and using such qualitative as are needed to adequately measure performance in priority areas identified by Congress (20 U.S.C. §1416; 34 C.F.R. §300.600).

Each state is required to have in place and submit to the secretary of education a state performance plan (SPP) and an annual performance report (APR) evaluating the state's efforts to implement the requirements and purposes of *IDEA*, and stating how such implementation will be improved around 20 indicators. Specific indicators related to transition and tertiary outcomes are as follows:

- *Indicator 1:* The percentage of youths with IEPs graduating from high school with a regular diploma.
- *Indicator 2:* The percentage of youths with IEPs dropping out of high school.
- *Indicator 13:* The percentage of youths with IEPs aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, which will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals; and annual IEP goals related to the student's transition services needs. There also must be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP Team meeting where transition services are to be discussed and evidence that, if appropriate, a representative of any participating agency was invited to the IEP Team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority; and
- *Indicator 14:* The percentage of youths who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and were:
  - a. Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school.
  - b. Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school.
  - c. Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school.

Note: The following link provides further information about Part B indicators and technical assistance resources offered to SEAs: <http://spp-apr-calendar.rfcnetwork.org/byindicator.html>.

**Transition Outcomes for Special Education Secondary Students.** The purpose of ED's IES research program on Transition Outcomes for Special Education Secondary Students is to contribute to the improvement of transition outcomes for secondary students with disabilities. Transition outcomes include the behavioral, social, functional, occupational, communication, and academic skills that enable youths with disabilities to obtain and hold meaningful employment, live independently, and obtain further education and training.

- Through this program IES supports research to: (1) explore malleable factors (e.g., transition services, students' competencies) that are associated with better transition outcomes for secondary students with disabilities, as well as mediators or moderators of the effects of these practices, for the purpose of identifying potential targets of intervention; (2) develop innovative interventions to improve the transition outcomes of secondary students with disabilities; (3) establish the efficacy of fully developed interventions for improving the transition outcomes of secondary students with disabilities; (4) provide evidence on the effectiveness of interventions for improving the transition outcomes of secondary students with disabilities when implemented at scale; and (5) develop and validate measures that assess skills predictive of successful transition outcomes for secondary students with disabilities.
- The long-term outcome of this research program will be an array of tools and strategies (e.g., assessments, intervention programs) that have been documented to be effective in improving transition outcomes for secondary students with disabilities. The following website provides more information: [http://ies.ed.gov/funding/ncser\\_rfas/ncser\\_transition.asp](http://ies.ed.gov/funding/ncser_rfas/ncser_transition.asp).

## CHAPTER 7. SUPPORT STRUCTURES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES TRANSITIONING TO TERTIARY EDUCATION

Chapter 7 presents the support services available to individuals with disabilities within the education system and during the transition to tertiary education, vocational training, and employment in the United States. This section also discusses how students access information about transition services and supports.

### Support Structures Available to Students With Disabilities

**Secondary Education Supports.** According to NLTS2, 72 percent of secondary school students with disabilities receive at least one related service. As expected, youths with disabilities tend to receive services and supports relevant to the functional limitations and academic challenges associated with the impairments that define their disability category (Wagner et al., 2006). Most services are provided through the school; however, outside agencies, such as psychological or mental health services, social work services, physical therapy, diagnostic medical services, and respite care, also provide support services.

Youths with disabilities can benefit from the following instructional strategies and supports in preparation for college and a career:

- Study skills and strategies instruction beginning in the seventh-grade year, or no later than the ninth-grade year;
- Exploration of career options on the basis of interests, aptitudes, values, and career-area strengths;
- Exploration of tertiary career preparation options, such as vocational–technical schools, community college career training, and 4-year university degree programs;
- Self-determination and self-advocacy skills training in the ninth- through 11th-grade year to prepare students for successful transition into college and the community; and
- Development of a personal youth profile and portfolio for use in the college application process or job search.

**Specially Designed Instruction.** Under *IDEA*, *specially designed instruction* means adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child under this part, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction: (a) to address the unique needs of the child that result from the child’s disability; and (b) to ensure access of the child to the general curriculum, so that the child can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children [§300.39(b)(3)]. For many students with disabilities the key to success in the classroom lies in having appropriate adaptations, accommodations, and modifications made to the instruction and other classroom activities. Modifications may involve changing the way that material is presented or the way that students respond to show their learning.

**Tertiary Support Services.** In order to take full advantage of tertiary education and training in mainstream institutions, students with disabilities can obtain disability-related support services and classroom accommodations as provided by the institution. According to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, an institution receiving federal funds may not exclude an individual from

participation in (or deny him or her the benefits of) any program or activity the institution offers solely because that individual has a disability. As nearly all tertiary institutions receive federal financial assistance of some kind, they should generally be prepared to make accommodations and adaptations that are specific to the needs of individuals with a disability.

In its 2007 *Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities*, ED's OCR highlighted the significant differences between the rights and responsibilities of students with disabilities in the high school setting and the rights and responsibilities these students will have once they are in the tertiary education setting. In addition, OCR provides information about typical accommodations and the role of the disability coordinator in tertiary education settings. The following website provides more information: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>.

**Support Structures in Employment.** The state VR agency may provide a variety of VR services in an employment setting to assist an eligible individual with disabilities to achieve an employment outcome pursuant to his or her IPE. These services may include intensive job-site training; facilitation of natural supports; special skills training; supplementary assessment; contact with employers, parents, family members, and advocacy organizations; and teaching compensatory workplace strategies. *Job development* means locating jobs for individuals with disabilities through networking with employers, businesses, and community leaders. The use of Business Advisory Councils is an excellent way to develop contacts that lead to employment for people with disabilities. An *employment specialist* or *consultant (job coach)*, who is typically employed by a job training and placement organization serving individuals with disabilities, matches clients with jobs; provides necessary supports during the initial employment period; and then facilitates the transition to natural workplace supports while reducing his or her role.

**Technology Supports.** America's reliance on an information-based economy has made the use of computers ubiquitous in tertiary settings and the workplace. Individuals with disabilities often require additional software or customized assistive technology, which enables them to make use of computer systems that are widely needed to perform in the workplace. For example, some supports include Web pages infused with text alternatives that can be read by speech and Braille output systems; videotapes that have captions for students who are deaf; and office equipment that can be operated from a seated position for students who use a wheelchair.

**Structural Supports and Physical Accessibility.** Federal laws include requirements related to the physical accessibility of facilities including those facilities used for higher education purposes. In recent decades, the removal of architectural barriers, such as providing curb cuts, ramps, and elevators, has helped make higher education more inclusive for students with disabilities. Structural accommodations involve making buildings accessible to individuals with disabilities. Typical structural accommodations include ramp availability, elevators, convenient parking, doorway and restroom facilities modifications, and architectural barriers removal or modifications.

The *Rehabilitation Act* and *ADA* require employers to make reasonable accommodations to the needs of qualified applicants or employees with disabilities to enable them to perform essential job functions. Adaptations fall into two categories: (1) structural change and (2) job modification. Reasonable accommodations, as defined by *ADA* (P.L. 101-336) include: (1) making existing facilities used by employees readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities and (2) job restructuring, part-time or modified work schedules, reassignment to a vacant position, acquisition or modification of equipment or devices, appropriate adjustment or modifications of examinations, training materials or policies, the provision of qualified readers or interpreters, and other similar accommodations for individuals with disabilities (42 U.S.C. §12111).

### **Accessibility of Information and Available Opportunities for Transition**

Secondary schools play a critical role in providing appropriate services and supports to students with disabilities. Parents depend on their children's school to provide information and service coordination, and to make arrangements for obtaining the services and supports needed. Parents of 81 percent of students with disabilities report learning about available services from their children's school. However, students with disabilities and their parents say that they are not well informed about the differences in the rights and responsibilities of schools and students as they move from high school to higher education (NCD, 2003). At both 2- and 4-year colleges, offices for disability student services or offices for special services provide information, services, and supports to students on campus.

**Roles and Initiatives That Support Transition Services.** The following list summarizes the roles and added value of academic and non-academic counseling and guidance services, transition services, remedial courses, and external supports.

***Secondary Transition Coordinator.*** Secondary transition specialists typically begin working with students when they reach age 16, although the transition planning process may begin earlier if determined appropriate by the IEP team, or required by state law. The coordinator, in consultation with the entire IEP team, works with the student to identify his or her preferences and goals. The coordinator collaborates with general and special educators to recommend a course of study through high school to prepare the students for careers and independent living in college or employment settings. The coordinator also arranges opportunities for the student (or a group of students) to learn about different careers through videos, job shadowing, visits to work environments, and hands-on work activities that allow the student(s) to try out a job. The coordinator makes connections with the adult service system; identifies the support services or accommodations the student may need in the tertiary setting; and assists students to assemble their portfolios including academic records, job experiences, resumes, and tertiary recommendations. Transition coordinators may, at the option of the school district, follow up with students and continue their support services for a period of time after the student graduates (Jackson, 2003).

***School Counselor/Guidance Counselor.*** Counselors assist students with personal, family, education-related, mental health, and career problems. Their duties vary greatly depending on their occupational specialty, which is determined by the setting in which they work and the population they serve. Education, vocational, and school counselors provide individuals and groups with career and educational counseling. School counselors assist students of all levels, from elementary school to tertiary education. They advocate for students and work with other individuals and organizations to promote the academic, career, personal, and social development of children and youths. School counselors help students evaluate their abilities, interests, talents, and personalities to develop realistic academic and career goals. Counselors use interviews, counseling sessions, interest and aptitude assessment tests, and other methods to evaluate and advise students. They also operate career information centers and career education programs. Often, counselors work with students who have academic and social development problems or other special needs. The following website provides more information concerning the role of a counselor: <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos067.htm#nature>.

***Disability Support Specialist (DSS).*** A DSS provides consultation and ongoing support to enable students to make full use of opportunities available at IHEs. The DSS director often serves as liaison with college faculty, staff, and administrators, VR counselors, and other social service agencies. The specialists serve as the central point of contact for information on physical and programmatic access, specific accommodations, resolutions, complaints and problems, faculty and staff concerns, and identification of available services. In addition, the disability office can



provide training, consultation, and information regarding disability issues. The coordinator of the Disability Resource Center also fulfills the role of the 504 coordinator and helps provide for reasonable accommodations. The disability coordinator evaluates documentation, works with students to determine appropriate services, assists students in arranging services or testing modifications, and addresses other concerns as they arise.

***VR Counselor.*** The VR counselor is often involved in a student's transition planning while the student, who has been determined eligible for the VR program, is still in high school. Upon graduating, if not before, the VR counselor works with the eligible student with a disability to assist with access to, and support in, employment or tertiary education. The VR counselor typically works for the state's VR agency, helping individuals with disabilities prepare for, and find employment. For students who are eligible for VR, services may include evaluation of the person's interests, capabilities, and limitations; job training; transportation; arrangement of aids and devices; job placement; support to begin tertiary education; and job follow-up. Priority in services is given to individuals with significant disabilities. *Disability Employment 101*, published by ED, further outlines the role of the VR counselor, and is available at: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/products/employmentguide/disabilityemployment101.pdf>.

***Job Coach.*** A job coach is known by several professional titles, such as specialist, job trainer, job consultant, and staffing specialist. He or she may come from a variety of backgrounds to include teaching, rehabilitation, or business and be responsible for assisting an individual with a disability in obtaining a job by creating a positive job match; maintaining a job through on-site assistances and other workplace supports; and advancing careers with career development. In many cases the job coach will spend time at the workplace to learn the job duties and industry standard and then assist the new employee to build proficiency over time. The following website provides more information concerning the role of the job coach: [http://www.worksupport.com/documents/va\\_board\\_factsheet1.pdf](http://www.worksupport.com/documents/va_board_factsheet1.pdf).

***Demonstration Projects.*** ED funds demonstration projects to ensure students with disabilities receive a quality higher education. Grantees in the program develop innovative, effective, and efficient teaching methods and other strategies to enhance the skills and abilities of tertiary faculty and administrators in working with students with disabilities. The activities funded include, but are not limited to: in-service training; professional development; customized and general technical assistance workshops; summer institutes; distance learning; training in the use of assistive and educational technology; and research related to tertiary students with disabilities. Several university initiatives assist faculty in 2- and 4-year colleges, universities, and graduate schools.

Note: Appendix III provides examples of materials designed to assist faculty to work with tertiary students with disabilities.

## **CHAPTER 8. AVAILABLE TRAINING FOR TRANSITION PERSONNEL AND PARENTS OF TRANSITIONAL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Chapter 8 addresses transition-related training of personnel and parents in the United States.

### **Transition-related Training for Teachers and Nonprofessionals**

Professional development is a comprehensive system of training and technical assistance (e.g., inservice training, mentoring systems, and online courses). Effective professional development systems tie preservice training to ongoing continuing education (in-service) activities. Comprehensive systems of transition professional development in special education focus on developing collaborative relationships among SEAs, LEAs, other state agencies, service providers, and IHEs (Morningstar and Kleinhammer-Tramill, 2005).

**Preservice and Continuing Education Models to Prepare Personnel to Deliver Transition Services.** Beginning with the Training of Professional Personnel Act of 1959 (P.L. 86-158), ED has supported a variety of personnel training projects to improve the competencies of K–12 teachers, administrators, researchers, and related services personnel to work with individuals with disabilities. More recently, ED’s Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) provides demonstration grants for higher education aimed at faculty development and preparation to work with students with disabilities.

Since the mid-1980s, Congress has authorized funds to prepare personnel to educate children and youths with disabilities. Included in this funding have been grants designed to prepare transition specialist personnel. Several of these programs meet the Council for Exceptional Children’s (CEC) Advanced Knowledge and Skills Base for Transition Specialists (2003) standards recognized by most states, and the National Standards and Quality Indicators of the National Alliance for Secondary Education and Transition (2005).

Several preservice and in-service transition certificate programs have been established that include content that address career, vocational, and transition services; vocational assessment; interagency collaboration; and curriculum in transition special education (intended for school-based personnel) or employment models for individuals with disabilities (intended for agency-based personnel). The programs can be completed through distance education, thereby increasing the recruitment pool to persons interested in gaining transition leadership skills. These programs provide an excellent opportunity for special educators, rehabilitation personnel, counselors, and related services personnel to improve their transition leadership skills.

**Transition Specialist Competencies.** The CEC’s Subcommittee on Knowledge and Skills and the CEC Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT) identified and validated competencies for beginning transition specialists. A transition specialist is defined as:

an individual who plans, coordinates, delivers, and evaluates transition education and services at the school or system level, in conjunction with other educators, families, students, and representatives of community organizations. (DCDT, 2000).

The following website provides more information on these transition specialist competencies:  
[http://www.dcdt.org/factsheets/DCDT\\_Fact\\_Sheet\\_Compentencies\\_3.pdf](http://www.dcdt.org/factsheets/DCDT_Fact_Sheet_Compentencies_3.pdf).

### **Training That Targets Parents**

**Parent Training and Information Centers (PTIs), Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRCs), and the National and Regional Parent Technical Assistance Centers.** PTIs in each state provide training and information to parents of, and professionals who work with, infants, toddlers, children, and youths with disabilities. This assistance helps parents to participate more effectively with professionals in meeting the educational needs of their child(ren) with disabilities. Each state has at least one parent center; states with large populations may have more. There are over 70 PTIs throughout the country. Thirty CPRCs serve targeted communities that experience significant isolation from information and resources because of such factors as poverty and language barriers. All parent centers must serve families of children with a full range of disabilities from birth to 26. The Technical Assistance Alliance for Parent Centers and the Regional Parent Technical Assistance Centers provide technical assistance to parent centers as well as collect information on the reach and effectiveness of the program. The following website provides further information about the parent centers: <http://www.taalliance.org>.

**Specialized Training of Military Parents (STOMP).** STOMP is the only National Parent Training and Information Center for military families that provides support and advice to military parents, without regard to the type of medical condition their child has. These families experience particular challenges related to:

- Difficulty implementing aspects of IDEA because of host country agreements (i.e., transition services into vocational programming, community access, and provision of related services);
- Laws, regulations and services that do not apply in overseas assignments, such as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and ED's regulations for the implementation of IDEA, and Medicaid;
- Continuity in provision of IEP services from state to state;
- Availability of military member during IEP meetings, medical treatments, and procedures;
- Finding specialists and physicians who will take TRICARE (a military health entitlement program);
- Reestablishing eligibility for community resources to assist children who are facing waiting lists for services needed;
- Identifying within each state, the array of services available and the differences in services from state to state; and
- Additional financial burdens due to certain allotments and aspects of military pay calculations when considering eligibility (i.e. clothing allowance, separate rations, housing).

The following website provides more information about STOMP:  
<http://www.stompproject.org>.

## CHAPTER 9. PARENTAL AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN TRANSITION

Chapter 9 addresses parents and the communities' role in helping students with disabilities transition from secondary education to tertiary education and employment in the United States.

### **Policy Communications and Expectations for Parent Involvement in Transition**

*The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* strengthened the role of parents in their children's IEPs and transition plans in school decision making and in teacher preparation. The Office of Special Education Programs requires states to address Indicator 8 in their state performance plan and annual performance report. Indicator 8 refers to the "Percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities." The law authorizes several types of related services that may be provided directly to the parents of students with disabilities to help their children progress in school. These services include counseling of parents regarding hearing loss and audiology services; planning and managing a program of psychological counseling for children and parents; group and individual counseling with the child and family; and parent training (34 C.F.R. §300.34).

Both *ESEA* and *IDEA* have increased the recognition of the importance of family-school connections and the integral role parents play in assisting in their children's learning, by encouraging them to be actively involved in their children's education and including specific statutory requirements for parent involvement (20 U.S.C. 6318 §1118(a); 20 U.S.C. §1415; Newman, 2005). The *ESEA* mandates that every Title I school have a written parent involvement policy that includes parents in its development. Both *IDEA* and *ESEA* convey three messages to parents, teachers, and service providers: (1) the importance of the parent-professional partnership in service delivery and improving educational outcomes for children and youths; (2) the inclusion of the family unit (system) as the target for intervention and support by the schools and community agencies; and (3) the importance of strengthening the families' role in decision making and educational improvement.

Both *IDEA* and *ESEA* require schools to transform the traditional notions of parent involvement from signing report cards, reading newsletters, and chaperoning holiday parties to include such activities as participating in school decision-making processes, providing input to teachers about how to assist their child, and forming genuine partnerships with the school community. Parents are also encouraged to be involved in policymaking at the state and local levels as members of advisory panels and in developing school improvement plans.

### **Nature of Involvement of Parents in the Transition Process to Tertiary Education and Employment**

**National Longitudinal Transition Study of Parents.** NLTS2 provided the first national picture of the involvement of families in the educational development of their secondary-school-age children with disabilities (Newman, 2005). Interviews and survey data was collected on 9,230 students who were age 13 through 16 in 2000.

Note: Appendix IV provides details of the NLTS2 parent survey in areas of involvement at home, at school, and in the IEP; student and family characteristics associated with family involvement; family expectations; and the relationship between family involvement and student achievement.

Families of most students with disabilities are very involved in supporting their children's educational development at home. Students with disabilities are more likely to receive help with homework than their peers in the general student population. Eighty-two percent of families reported regularly talking with their children about school, 75 percent reported helping their child with homework at least once a week, and one in five families provide homework assistance as often as five or more times per week.

Family involvement in the education-related activities at home measured by NLTS2 does vary across disability categories. Youths with emotional disturbances are among the least likely to receive help with homework. Students with multiple disabilities, autism, or orthopedic impairments receive the most frequent homework assistance; 31 to 36 percent received help five or more times a week compared to 20 percent of students with learning disabilities.

Parent participation in the development of their children's IEP is a type of family-school partnership specific to families of students with disabilities who qualify for special education services. Nearly nine out of 10 parents of secondary-school-age students with disabilities reported participating in at least one IEP meeting. According to teachers, 83 percent of parents attended the most recent IEP meeting in the current school year; whereas 88 percent of parents reported attending the most recent IEP meeting. Some difference in parent and teacher perception would be expected since teachers' reports are for a 1-year period instead of the 2-year period reported by parents.

Family attendance at IEP meetings does not always ensure active participation in the decision making process. Slightly more than half of the families report being involved in developing IEP goals. When asked how they felt about their family's involvement in decisions about their children's IEP, about one-third indicated they wanted to be more involved. The majority of families of students with other health impairments (96 percent) or traumatic brain injuries (96 percent) are among those most likely to attend IEP meetings. Families of students with mental retardation (85 percent) or speech impairments (86 percent) are among those least likely to attend IEP meetings.

The expectations that parents hold for the future of their children partially reflect their experiences with, and perceptions of, the ways their children's disabilities are thought to limit their activities and accomplishments. However, NLTS2 findings suggest that family expectations for the future also help shape the achievements of youths with disabilities, irrespective of the nature of the disability, and the level of functioning, particularly with regard to academic engagement and achievement. Other things being equal, youths with disabilities whose parents expect them to go on to tertiary education after high school have more positive engagement and achievements while in high school than youths whose parents do not share that optimism for the future. The NLTS study describes families' involvement at home and at school in support of their children's education during the secondary school-years. The author concludes that families continue to assist their children beyond the secondary school years, often by acting as a case manager (Newman, 2005).

## **Federal Initiatives to Promote Parent Involvement**

**Parent Training and Information Centers (PTIs) and Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRCs).** The PTIs and CPRCs in each state provide training and information to parents of infants, toddlers, children, and youths with disabilities and to professionals who work with them. This assistance helps parents to participate more effectively with professionals in meeting their children's educational needs. The Parent Centers work to improve outcomes for children ages birth to 26 years

with **all** disabilities (emotional, learning, cognitive, and physical). The following website provides more information on the PTIs and CPRCs: <http://www.taalliance.org>.

**National and Regional Parent Technical Assistance Centers (PTACs).** The PTACs form a partnership of one national and six regional parent technical assistance centers, each funded by ED's OSEP. These seven projects comprise a unified technical assistance system for the purpose of developing, assisting, and coordinating the over 100 PTIs and CPRCs under *IDEA*. The national and regional parent technical assistance centers work to strengthen the connections to the larger OSEP Technical Assistance and Dissemination (TA&D) Network and to fortify partnerships between Parent Centers and education systems at national, state, and local levels. The following website provides more information on the PTACs: <http://www.taalliance.org>.

**Technical Assistance on Transition and the Rehabilitation Act (TATRA).** The TATRA project and other Parent Information and Training programs, funded by ED's RSA, focus on helping families prepare youths with disabilities for employment and independent living. These projects provide information and training on transition planning, the adult service system, and strategies that prepare youths for successful employment, tertiary education, and independent living outcomes. The following website provides more information on TATRA: <http://www.pacer.org/tatra>.

**The Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD).** ADD funds several grant programs which address a variety of issues related to persons with disabilities, including work to improve educational outcomes and outreach to families. The Developmental Disabilities Grant Programs are comprised of three state-based programs that collaborate with each other as well as with other entities in their respective states. They are:

- [State Protection and Advocacy Agencies \(P&As\)](#);
- [University Centers for the Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service \(UCEDD\)](#); and
- [State Councils on Developmental Disabilities \(SCDD\)](#).

### **Engagement of Nongovernmental Organizations Concerned With Disabilities**

Many national associations and disability-focused organizations and foundations provide either technical assistance, information, professional training and credentialing, or donations and grants to support projects for individuals with disabilities. These organizations provide resources for programs and services in the following areas: accessibility projects, blindness, cultural programs, deafness, developmental disabilities, education, aging, emotional disabilities, independent living programs, learning disabilities, mental health, physical disabilities, rehabilitation, and speech impairment.

OSERS funded the IDEA Partnership project (Partnership) to facilitate interaction and shared work across professional and family organizations around common interests. The Partnership helps to support opportunities for collaboration with national associations, disability organizations, and their state and local affiliates with a focus on improving results for all students, including students with disabilities. The Partnership created Communities of Practice (CoP) that states and stakeholder organizations affiliate with based on their common interest in improving practice. The CoPs are focused on shared implementation of *IDEA* and the alignment of *IDEA* with other federal legislation. The Transition CoP was established in 2004 and includes four federal agencies, 10 states and many national organizations. Together, they focus on such issues as youths' roles in their transition planning; increasing accessible transportation; outreach to child welfare, juvenile justice, mental health, employment; and postsecondary options. The following website provides more information about the IDEA Partnership project: <http://www.ideapartnership.org>.

Note: Appendix V provides further information about national associations and disability organizations that advocate on the behalf of individuals with disabilities.

## CHAPTER 10. EXISTING CHALLENGES AND NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Chapter 10 discusses the challenges that still exist in transition services for individuals with disabilities in tertiary education and employment in the U.S. In addition, this chapter explores new developments within the current administration that address those challenges to improve outcomes for students with disabilities in their transition from secondary education to tertiary education and employment.

### **The Remaining Challenges in Transition Services**

The Department has, and continues to, invest in improving access to education and employment preparation programs and to increase the social and economic independence of youths with disabilities. Successful transition from secondary schooling is recognized as a chief indicator of the effectiveness of the educational system for preparing youths for adult independence (Baer et al., 2003; Madaus and Shaw, 2004; Wagner, Newman, Cameto and Levine, 2006). This report shows that during the past 25 years, major transformations have occurred in educational, social, political, and economic areas that affect the education and development of youths with disabilities and the institutions that support them. Despite progress made, the unemployment rate for individuals with disabilities is significantly higher than the rate for individuals without disabilities. Providing transition services to students with disabilities continues to be a challenge in states, and there are wide variations in standards for transition planning (Johnson, 2005; Miller, Lombard, and Corbey, 2006). Furthermore, when surveying students, parents, teachers and others, GAO found that a variety of problems impede youth transition to tertiary education and employment, including poor linkages between schools and other youth service providers and a lack of community work experience while in high school (GAO, 2003). Several sectors continue to work together to seek solutions to the persistent barriers to transition, which include duplication and overlap of program requirements; poor coordination of services; the change in responsibility from parent to student in updating and maintaining the IEP; underdeveloped and insufficient preparation of teachers, counselors, administrators, and service providers to provide transition services; the inadequate communication of the availability of services for students once they leave secondary education; and issues in data collection.

### **Transition Personnel Awareness and Availability of Transition Supports**

An important factor that affects students' with disabilities persistence and retention in tertiary education is faculty members' awareness of the disability needs of students, available supports on campus, and their responsibility for making accommodations. Failure to make needed accommodations may lead to diminished student performance and invite misunderstanding or conflict that could lead to dropping out or to adversarial relationships with tertiary institutions (NCD's Youth Advisory Committee, 2003). States may also use *ARRA* funds to address this challenge. The Department's 2009 report, *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009: Using ARRA Funds Provided Through Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to Drive School Reform and Improvement* (<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/guidance/idea-b-reform.pdf>) encourages states to use *IDEA*, Part B, *ARRA* funds for transition services to:

- Hire transition personnel who possess the knowledge and skills to work with teachers, businesses, employers, community colleges, technical schools, and IHEs to create an effective interagency



transition system for students with disabilities that fosters interagency coordination between the school, the community, and the post-school adult service system.

- Purchase transition-curriculum and career assessment, exploration, and development tools for students with disabilities.
- Provide technical assistance and professional development to enhance the knowledge and skills of special educators regarding transition strategies, including how to effectively use transition-curriculum and career assessment, exploration, and development tools.
- Employ staff to provide technical assistance and professional development to enhance the knowledge and skills of special educators regarding transition strategies, including how to effectively use transition-curriculum and career assessment, exploration, and development tools.
- Hire consultants to integrate data regarding the provision of transition services to students with disabilities into other data collection systems to better support and track student outcomes.

### **A Comprehensive Plan for American Education**

The Obama Administration has laid out a comprehensive cradle-to-career education plan that begins at birth and goes through the end of college. To be successful in rebuilding the nation's economy, early learning programs need to prepare the youngest children for kindergarten so they are ready to start reading and learning, K–12 schools need to make sure students have all of the academic knowledge and skills that they need to enter college or the workforce, and higher education system needs to offer whatever advanced learning students need to be successful in a career, whether they will become a plumber, a teacher, or a business executive. The Administration is committed to addressing the needs at every level of the education system, from expanding access to high-quality early learning programs to improving the rigor of the academic programs in K–12 schools, to making college more affordable and accessible. This plan will support efforts to improve outcomes for students with disabilities as they transition from secondary education to tertiary education and employment.

### ***The Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010***

The Administration has also approached the barriers to higher education by strengthening support for 2-year community colleges, which tend to offer more varied and specialized services that focus on serving students with disabilities. In response to the needs of disadvantaged students as well as to the broader issue of ensuring America's economic strength in an increasingly competitive world economy, in July 2009 President Obama proposed the American Graduation Initiative to invest in community colleges and help American workers get the skills and credentials they need to succeed. The *Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act*, P.L. 111-152, includes \$2 billion over 4 years for community college and career training. These resources will help community colleges and other institutions develop, improve, and provide education and training, suitable for workers who are eligible for trade adjustment assistance. The initiative will be housed at DOL and implemented in close cooperation with the ED. With these resources, community colleges across the country could:

- **Work with businesses.** Colleges could build partnerships with businesses and the workforce investment system to create career pathways through which workers will earn new credentials and promotions through step-by-step, work site education programs that build essential skills. Colleges will work closely with employers to design training that is relevant to the local labor market and likely to lead to employment and careers.
- **Create education partnerships.** Colleges could work with other education institutions to expand course offerings and promote the transfer of credit among colleges.
- **Teach basic skills.** Colleges could improve remedial and adult education programs, accelerating students' progress and integrating developmental classes into academic and vocational classes.

- **Meet students' needs.** Colleges could offer their students more than just a course catalog through comprehensive, personalized services to help them plan their careers, stay in school, and graduate.
- **Develop online courses.** Colleges could create open online course materials, such as interactive tutors, simulations, and multimedia software, that can help students learn more, and learn better, in less time.

**Education Reconciliation: The *Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act (SAFRA)***

President Obama has identified an opportunity to make investments in America's economic future by making college more affordable. The *SAFRA* (which was included in the *Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010* (P. L. 111-152) was signed into law on March 30, 2010. It will provide a large investment in federal student aid, specifically:

- \$36 billion over 10 years to increase the maximum annual Pell Grant to \$5,550 in FY2010 and to \$5,975 by FY2017. Starting in FY2013, the Pell Grant will be linked to match rising costs-of-living by indexing it to the Consumer Price Index. This includes an investment of \$13.5 billion to fund a shortfall in the Pell Grant program due to increased demand.
- \$750 million to bolster college access and completion support for students. It will increase funding for the College Access Challenge Grant Program, and will also fund innovative programs at states and institutions that focus on increasing financial literacy and helping retain and graduate students.
- \$1.5 billion to strengthen an Income-Based Repayment program that currently allows borrowers to cap their monthly federal student loan payments at 15 percent of their discretionary income, thus making federal loans more affordable for borrowers to repay. These new provisions would lower this monthly cap to just 10 percent for new borrowers after 2014.
- \$2.55 billion in Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and other minority-serving institutions to provide students with the support they need to stay in school and graduate.
- \$2 billion in a competitive grant program for community colleges to develop and improve education or career training programs. (for more on *SAFRA*, see <http://edlabor.house.gov/blog/2009/07/student-aid-and-fiscal-respons.shtml>).

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## APPENDICES

<b>Appendix I: Definitions of Disability Categories in IDEA</b>	
<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Autism	<p>A developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Autism does not apply if a child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disturbance, as defined below.</li> <li>• A child who manifests the characteristics of autism after age 3 could be identified as having autism if the criteria described in this definition are satisfied.</li> </ul>
Deaf-blindness	<p>Concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness.</p>
Deafness	<p>A hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification that adversely affects a child's educational performance.</p>
Emotional disturbance	<p>A condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.</li> <li>• An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.</li> <li>• Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.</li> <li>• A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.</li> <li>• A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.</li> </ul> <p>Emotional disturbance includes schizophrenia. The term does not apply to children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they have an emotional disturbance consistent with the criteria in this definition.</p>

<b>Appendix I: Definitions of Disability Categories in <i>IDEA</i> (Continued)</b>	
<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Hearing impairment	An impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance but that is not included under the definition of deafness in this section.
Mental retardation	Significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period that adversely affects a child's educational performance.
Multiple disabilities	Concomitant impairments (such as mental retardation-blindness or mental retardation-orthopedic impairment), the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments. Multiple disabilities does not include deaf-blindness.
Orthopedic impairments	A severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by a congenital anomaly, impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns that cause contractures).
Other health impairment	Having limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is due to chronic or acute health problems, such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and Tourette syndrome; and</li> <li>• Adversely affects a child's educational performance.</li> </ul>
Specific learning disability	A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions, such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.  Specific learning disability does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.
Speech or language impairment.	A communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

<b>Appendix I: Definitions of Disability Categories in IDEA (Continued)</b>	
<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Traumatic brain injury	An acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Traumatic brain injury applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas, such as cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; and speech. Traumatic brain injury does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or to brain injuries induced by birth trauma.
Visual impairment/blindness	An impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.

Source: *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* [34 C.F.R. §300.8; 20 U.S.C. §1401(3); 1409(30)]



## Appendix II: Summary of Additional Data Collection Resources

Resource	Description
Annual Report to Congress on Implementation of <i>IDEA</i> , U.S. Department of Education	The purpose of this report is to provide an annual overview of activities funded under the <i>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)</i> . ( <a href="http://www.ed.gov/about/reports/annual/osep/index.html">http://www.ed.gov/about/reports/annual/osep/index.html</a> )
Data collected under Section 618 of <i>IDEA</i> , U.S. Department of Education	Section 618 of <i>IDEA</i> specifies data that states must collect and report that measure results for children and families served through state Part B and Part C programs. ( <a href="http://www.ideadata.org">http://www.ideadata.org</a> )
National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS), National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education	This study is a comprehensive nationwide study is designed to determine how students and their families pay for postsecondary education, and to describe demographic and other characteristics of those enrolled. NPSAS is based on a nationally representative sample of students in postsecondary education institutions, including undergraduate, graduate, and first-professional students. Students attending all types and levels of institutions are represented, including public and private not-for-profit and for-profit institutions, and less-than-2-year institutions, community colleges, and 4-year colleges and universities. Each of the NPSAS surveys provided information on the cost of postsecondary education, the distribution of financial aid, and the characteristics of both aided and non-aided students and their families. ( <a href="http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/npsas/">http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/npsas/</a> )
Common Core of Data, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education	Common Core of Data is the Department of Education's primary database on public elementary and secondary education in the United States, presenting a comprehensive, annual, national statistical database of all public elementary and secondary schools and school districts. Among CCD collections and reports include estimates of the number of high school graduates and dropout data for grades 9 through 12 for public schools, with current estimates available for the 2006–07 school year. ( <a href="http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/index.asp">http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/index.asp</a> )
National Center on Education Outcomes, U.S. Department of Education	Funded by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), this Center collects and analyzes data on state graduation requirements and diploma options for students with and without disabilities. ( <a href="http://www.cehd.umn.edu/NCEO">http://www.cehd.umn.edu/NCEO</a> )

**Appendix II: Summary of Additional Data Collection Resources (Continued)**

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Description</b>
The Beginning Postsecondary Students Study (BPS), National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education	This study examines how well students with disabilities do in completing a postsecondary degree. The study reported on students who began college in the 1995–96 academic year, five years after they enrolled. The BPS is a subsample cohort of the NPSAS 95–96 followed through college and beyond. ( <a href="http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/bps/">http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/bps/</a> )
Postsecondary Education Quick Information System (PEQIS), National Center for Education Statistics U.S. Department of Education	PEQIS collects timely data on focused issues needed for program planning and policy development. A PEQIS survey is currently being conducted to provide the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) with current information about students with disabilities at postsecondary institutions, and the services and accommodations that the institutions provide to these students. This effort will update the most recent nationally representative data available from postsecondary institutions about the enrollment of students with disabilities and the support services and accommodations these institutions provide to students with disabilities that were collected in a PEQIS survey conducted in 1998. ( <a href="http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/peqis">http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/peqis</a> )
The Disability Statistics Center, U.S. Department of Education	Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDDR) collects a wide variety of statistical information about individuals with disabilities. ( <a href="http://dsc.ucsf.edu/main.php">http://dsc.ucsf.edu/main.php</a> )
Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection, U.S. Department of Education	The Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) collects data on key education and civil rights issues in public schools for use by OCR and other ED offices, as well as policymakers and researchers outside of ED. The CRDC provides information about students in public elementary and secondary schools, including enrollment, access to educational programs or services, and academic proficiency results, disaggregated or broken out, by factors including race, ethnicity, sex, and disability. Currently, the CRDC website contains data from surveys in 2000, 2004, and 2006. ( <a href="http://ocrdata.ed.gov">http://ocrdata.ed.gov</a> )

**Appendix II: Summary of Additional Data Collection Resources (Continued)**

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Description</b>
Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) Grant Program, U.S. Department of Education	The SLDS grant program, as authorized by <i>the Educational Technical Assistance Act of 2002</i> is designed to assist SEAs in developing and implementing longitudinal data systems. The purpose of the SLDS grant program is to enable SEAs to design, develop, and implement statewide, longitudinal data systems in order to efficiently and accurately manage, analyze, disaggregate, and use individual student data. The long-term goal of the program is to enable all states to create comprehensive P-20 systems that permit the generation and use of accurate and timely data; support analysis and informed decision making at all levels of the education system; increase the efficiency with which data may be analyzed to support the continuous improvement of education services and outcomes; facilitate research to improve student academic achievement and close achievement gaps; support education accountability systems; and simplify the processes used by SEAs to make education data transparent through federal and public reporting. ( <a href="http://nces.ed.gov/Programs/SLDS/grant_information.asp">http://nces.ed.gov/Programs/SLDS/grant_information.asp</a> )
Social Security Administration (SSA)	The Social Security Administration provides data on minor children with disabilities (birth to attainment of age 18) and adults with disabilities (beginning at age 18) who have low income and limited resources receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. ( <a href="http://www.ssa.gov">http://www.ssa.gov</a> )
National Longitudinal Surveys, U.S. Department of Labor	The surveys are designed to gather information at multiple points in time on the labor market activities and other significant life events of several groups of men and women. They include the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 (NLSY97) (young men and women born in the years 1980-84; respondents were ages 12–17 when first interviewed in 1997); the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1979 (NLSY79) (men and women born in the years 1957–64; respondents were ages 14–22 when first interviewed in 1979); and the NLSY79 Children and Youth (survey of the biological children of women in the NLSY79). ( <a href="http://www.bls.gov/nls/home.htm">http://www.bls.gov/nls/home.htm</a> )

**Appendix II: Summary of Additional Data Collection Resources (Continued)**

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Description</b>
The National Center for Health Statistics, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)	<p>The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) sponsors the National Health Interview Survey and the National Health Interview Survey-Disabilities, last conducted in 1997. The center has two major types of data systems: systems based on populations, containing data collected through personal interviews or examinations; and systems based on records, containing data collected from vital and medical records. NCHS provides access to the latest year of Health US, which summarizes health surveys and results. The survey contains questions related to medical home, transition, screening, and access to community-based services.</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis.htm">http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis.htm</a> or <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis/nhis_disability.htm">http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis/nhis_disability.htm</a>)</p>

<b>Appendix III: Examples of Resources Designed to Assist Faculty to Work With Tertiary Students With Disabilities</b>	
<b>Resource</b>	<b>Description</b>
The Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology (DO-IT), University of Washington	The DO-IT program at University of Washington in Seattle, serves to increase the participation of individuals with disabilities in challenging academic programs and careers. DO-IT creates materials to promote faculty knowledge about accommodating students with disabilities in classrooms and in distance learning (e.g., <i>Working Together: Faculty and Students with Disabilities</i> ). ( <a href="http://www.washington.edu/doiit">http://www.washington.edu/doiit</a> )
The IRIS Center for Training Enhancements, Peabody College, Vanderbilt University	The IRIS Center develops training enhancement materials to be used by faculty and professional development providers for the preparation of school personnel. The center works with experts from across the nation to create challenge-based interactive modules, case study units, and a variety of activities. Modules and materials for facilitating transitions for students with disabilities from high school to post-school settings are provided. ( <a href="http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu">http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu</a> )
Web Accessibility 101, University of Wisconsin	University of Wisconsin's <i>Web Accessibility 101</i> is a web-based tutorial for faculty that is designed to increase the awareness web designers have towards access barriers, and thus, result in Web pages that are free of such obstacles. ( <a href="http://www.doit.wisc.edu/accessibility/online-course/index.htm">http://www.doit.wisc.edu/accessibility/online-course/index.htm</a> )
ACCESS to Postsecondary Education through Universal Design for Learning, Colorado State University	Colorado State University's <i>ACCESS</i> project offers a replicable training program to provide technical assistance and professional development for Colorado State University faculty, staff, and administrators. ( <a href="http://accessproject.colostate.edu">http://accessproject.colostate.edu</a> )
The Fast Facts for Faculty, Ohio State University	<i>The Fast Facts</i> publications at the Nisonger Center are information briefs designed to help college and university instructors improve the climate and quality of education for students with disabilities. ( <a href="http://ada.osu.edu/resources/fastfacts/index.htm">http://ada.osu.edu/resources/fastfacts/index.htm</a> )
University of Massachusetts Equity and Excellence in Higher Education	The program is a universal course design that supports all students in gaining access to and completing a postsecondary education. This project will demonstrate how the application of the Universal Course Design model positively impacts the academic success of all students, including students with disabilities. ( <a href="http://www.ccids.umaine.edu/projects/ee-udl/default.htm">http://www.ccids.umaine.edu/projects/ee-udl/default.htm</a> )

**Appendix III: Examples of Resources Designed to Assist Faculty to Work With Tertiary Students With Disabilities (Continued)**

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Description</b>
Transition to Adulthood, National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities, Academy for Educational Development	Transition to Adulthood includes several resources: IDEA's Definition of Transition Services, Students at the Heart of Planning Their Transition, A Closer Look at What to Include in the IEP, The Domains of Adulthood, and other resources. ( <a href="http://www.nichcy.org/EducateChildren/transition_adulthood/pages/default.aspx#anchor8">http://www.nichcy.org/EducateChildren/transition_adulthood/pages/default.aspx#anchor8</a> )
Adolescent Health Transition Project, University of Washington - Seattle	The <i>Adolescent Health Transition Project</i> , operated by the Center on Human Development and Disability (CHDD), at the University of Washington, Seattle, is designed to help smooth the transition from pediatric to adult health care for adolescents with special health-care needs. This site is a resource for information, materials, and links to other people with an interest in health transition issues. Tools include adolescent autonomy checklist, adolescent health plans, and the adolescent transition resource notebook. ( <a href="http://depts.washington.edu/healthtr">http://depts.washington.edu/healthtr</a> )

#### **Appendix IV: Highlights of the U.S. Department of Education’s National Longitudinal Transition Study-2, 2001 Parent Survey**

***Involvement at Home.*** Families of most students with disabilities are very involved in supporting their children’s educational development at home.

- Most families report regularly talking with their children about school and helping with homework at least once a week.
- One in five provides homework assistance as often as five or more times per week.
- Students with disabilities are more likely to receive help with homework than are their peers in the general population.
- The difference in homework support is especially apparent for those who receive frequent help; students with disabilities are five times as likely as their peers in the general population to receive homework assistance frequently.
- Family support for education at home varies across disability categories.
- Youths with emotional disturbances are among the least likely to receive help with homework.
- Students with multiple disabilities, autism, or orthopedic impairments receive the most frequent homework assistance.

***Involvement at School and in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Process.*** Many families of students with disabilities are involved at their children’s schools, with almost all participating in at least one type of school-based activity.

- Families attend general school meetings, parent-teacher conferences, and school or class events, and, to a lesser extent, volunteer at school.
- Parents who participate in school-based activities are most frequently at the school for school or class events, such as science fairs, student performances, sports activities, and awards assemblies.
- Families of students with disabilities are as involved as their peers in the general population; and, for some types of school-based activities—general school meetings and parent-teacher conferences—they are more involved.
- Nearly nine out of 10 parents of secondary-school-age students with disabilities report participating in at least one IEP meeting in the current or prior school year.
- Slightly more than half of the families report being involved in developing IEP goals.
- About one-third of families want to be more involved in IEP decision making.
- Family involvement in educational activities at school varies by disability category, with more variation in attending a school or class event or volunteering at school than in attending a general school meeting or an IEP meeting.
- Students with speech or orthopedic impairments have parents who consistently are among the most likely to participate in several types of school-based activities.
- Families of students with emotional disturbances or mental retardation are among the least likely to attend a general school meeting or a school or class event or to volunteer at the school, but are among those most likely to attend parent-teacher conferences.

**Appendix IV: Highlights of the U.S. Department of Education's National Longitudinal Transition Study-2, 2001 Parent Survey (Continued)**

- Families of students with other health impairments or traumatic brain injuries are among those most likely to attend IEP meetings.
- Families of students with mental retardation or speech impairments are among those least likely to attend IEP meetings.

***Student and Family Characteristics Associated With Family Involvement.*** Several characteristics of students with disabilities are related to the participation of their families in their educational development, when controlling for other differences.

- Families of students experiencing problems in more disabilities and having lower functional cognitive skills are more likely to help with homework than families of students with fewer impairments.
- Negative youth behavior related to lower levels of family involvement at school and home.
- Involvement in home- and school-based activities is lower among families of older students with disabilities.
- Parents of daughters in secondary school are more likely than parents of sons to help with homework and to be involved at school.
- Neither student age nor gender is related to parent participation in the IEP process.
- Families of Hispanic students are less likely than families of white students to be involved in home-based education-related activities.
- African-American students have families who are more likely to be involved at home than their white peers but less likely to be involved at school and to attend IEP meetings.
- Students who attend their neighborhood school are more likely to have families who participate at the school and attend IEP meetings than are those who attend schools not located in their local area.
- Families of students who are actively involved in extracurricular activities at school are more likely to participate in school-based activities.

In addition to the relationships between family involvement and student characteristics, levels of involvement also relate to characteristics of families themselves.

- Having more family resources—higher incomes or higher levels of parental educational attainment—is associated with higher levels of involvement of all kinds.
- Families with two parents in the household are more likely than single-parent families to be involved at home and at school.
- Having external supports is related to more frequent participation. Those who belong to support groups for families of children with disabilities and those who participate in OSEP-supported or other types of training are more likely to support their children's educational development.



#### Appendix IV: Highlights of the U.S. Department of Education's National Longitudinal Transition Study-2, 2001 Parent Survey (Continued)

- Families with higher expectations for their children's postsecondary educational attainment are less likely to help with homework but are more likely to be involved at school than families of youths with disabilities who are less optimistic for their children's continued education.
- The more satisfied families are with their children's schools, the less likely they are to spend time on homework support.

Families of students who receive special education services frequently deal with issues unique to parenting these students, including participation in the IEP process. However, variations in levels of participation associated with differences in youth's cognitive abilities, behavior, age, gender, race/ethnicity, family income, mother's educational attainment, number of parents and siblings in the household, and level of social support for families of students with disabilities parallel those of families of students in the general population.

**Family Expectations.** A majority of youths with disabilities, but not all, have parents who expect them to experience future success in many aspects of education and independence.

- Eighty-five percent or more of parents "definitely" or "probably" expect their child will graduate from high school with a regular diploma and live independently.
- Although virtually all youths are expected to be able to find paid employment, fewer than two-thirds are expected to further their education after high school.
- More than four out of five youths are expected to achieve financial independence.
- Expectations regarding completing a 2-year college program and finding paid employment have increased for youths with disabilities since 1987, yet expectations for educational attainment lag behind those of youths in the general population.
- Parents of about 15 percent of youths with disabilities do not expect them to receive a regular high school diploma or to live independently; nearly two out of five are not expected to pursue postsecondary education.
- Lower expectations are particularly common for youths with mental retardation, autism, multiple disabilities, and, to a somewhat lesser extent, deaf-blindness.
- Expectations are generally lower for youths with disabilities from lower-income households.

**Relationship Between Family Involvement and Student Achievements.** The importance of family involvement and expectations is supported by NLTS2 analyses. Parents' activities in support of their children's education is associated with consistent differences in several achievement domains, independent of disability, functioning, or other differences among youths.

- Youths whose families are more involved in their schools are less far behind grade level in reading, tend to receive better grades, and have higher rates of involvement in organized groups (many of which are school based) and with individual friendships than youths with less family involvement at school.

**Appendix IV: Highlights of the U.S. Department of Education's National Longitudinal Transition Study-2, 2001 Parent Survey (Continued)**

- In the independence domain, youths whose families are more involved in their schools are more likely than youths from less-involved families to have had regular paid jobs in the preceding year.

When holding disability, functioning, or other differences among youths constant, youths with disabilities whose parents expect them to go on to postsecondary education are more likely to:

- Have positive classroom engagement behaviors in all settings and receive better grades than youths who are not expected to continue their education.
- Be closer to grade level in their tested reading and math abilities than youths who are not expected to further their education after high school.
- Avoid disciplinary actions and affiliate with organized groups, many of which may be sponsored by or meet at school.

In the independence domain, when controlling for other differences, youths with disabilities whose parents have high expectations that they will live independently in the future are more likely to:

- Assume household responsibilities while in high school than are those who are not expected to live independently.

Source: Newman, L. (2005). *Family involvement in the educational development of youth with disabilities*. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

**Appendix V: Selected National Associations and Disability Organizations That Advocate on Behalf of Persons With Disabilities, Including Youths in Transition**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Description</b>
American Association of People With Disabilities (AAPD)	AAPD is the largest national not-for-profit cross-disability member organization in the United States, dedicated to ensuring economic self-sufficiency and political empowerment for the more than 56 million Americans with disabilities.
American Foundation for the Blind (AFB)	AFB addresses the most critical issues facing this growing population: independent living, literacy, employment, and technology. AFB provides information and referral for people who are blind or visually impaired, publishes professional materials on blindness and low vision, and advocates for the interests of blind before Congress.
Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA)	LDA is a not-for-profit volunteer organization advocating for individuals with learning disabilities. It is a national organization devoted to defining and finding solutions for the broad spectrum of learning disabilities. LDA has a local chapter in all 50 states, Washington DC, and Puerto Rico.
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)	ASHA is the professional, scientific, and credentialing association for over 110,000 audiologists, speech-language pathologists, and speech, language, and hearing scientists. ASHA's mission is to ensure that all people with speech, language, and hearing disorders have access to quality services to help them communicate more effectively.
The Arc of the United States	The Arc of the United States (formerly Association for Retarded Citizens of the United States) is the country's largest voluntary organization committed to the welfare of all children and adults with mental retardation and their families.
Association on Higher Education and Disability	AHEAD is an independent voluntary organization working to promote improved access for individuals with disabilities to postsecondary education.
Autism Society of America (ASA)	ASA is a leading source of information and referral on autism, with over 200 chapters in nearly every state. The mission of the ASA is to promote lifelong access and opportunity for all individuals within the autism spectrum and their families, to be fully participating, included members of their community.
Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA)	BIAA comprises a national network of more than 41 chartered state affiliates across the country and works on behalf of individuals with brain injury and their families.

**Appendix V: Selected National Associations and Disability Organizations That Advocate on Behalf of Persons With Disabilities, Including Youths in Transition (Continued)**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Description</b>
Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)	CHADD provides education, advocacy, and support for individuals with AD/HD. It also publishes a variety of printed materials to keep members and professionals current on research advances, medications and treatments affecting individuals with AD/HD.
The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)	CEC is the largest international professional organization dedicated to improving the educational success of individuals with disabilities and/or gifts and talents. CEC advocates for appropriate governmental policies, sets professional standards, provides professional development, advocates for individuals with exceptionalities, and helps professionals obtain conditions and resources necessary for effective professional practice.
The Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR)	CSAVR is composed of the chief administrators of the public rehabilitation agencies serving individuals with physical and mental disabilities in the states, District of Columbia, and the territories. These agencies constitute the state partners in the state-federal program of rehabilitation services provided under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. The Council's members supervise the rehabilitation of some 1.2 million persons with disabilities. Founded in 1940 to provide input into the state-federal Rehabilitation Program, the council is the only national organization whose sole purpose and function is to advocate for the Public Vocational Rehabilitation Program.
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)	DREDF is a national law and policy center dedicated to protecting and advancing the civil rights of individuals with disabilities through legislation, litigation, advocacy, technical assistance, and education and training of attorneys, advocates, individuals with disabilities, and parents of children with disabilities.
Easter Seals	Easter Seals serves children and adults with disabilities, their families and communities through early intervention and child development services, vocational training and employment services, and physical medicine and rehabilitation. There are over 400 sites across the country, including Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico.
Job Accommodation Network (JAN)	JAN is a free consulting service designed to increase the employability of individuals with disabilities by providing individualized work site accommodations solutions, technical assistance regarding the <i>ADA</i> and other disability related legislation, and information to individuals about self-employment options.

**Appendix V: Selected National Associations and Disability Organizations That Advocate on Behalf of Persons With Disabilities, Including Youths in Transition (Continued)**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Description</b>
National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE)	For more than 70 years, NASDSE has been providing leadership to improve educational services and outcomes for students with disabilities throughout the United States, the federal territories and the Freely Associated States of Palau, Micronesia and the Marshall Islands. NASDSE's members, the state directors of special education, continue to face evolving challenges of implementing state and federal statutes and regulations while striving for a balanced system of accountability that supports a focus on results for each and every child. NASDSE offers support through a range of activities that includes support through communities of practice, training on current issues, technical assistance, policy analysis, research, national initiatives and collaborative partnerships to enhance problem solving at the local, state and national levels.
National Mental Health Association (NMHA)	NMHA is the nation's oldest and largest not-for-profit organization addressing all aspects of mental health and mental illness. NMHA works to improve the mental health of 54 million people with mental disorders, through advocacy, education, research and service.
United Cerebral Palsy Association, Incorporated (UCP)	As one of the largest health charities in America, UCP's mission is to advance the independence, productivity and full citizenship of people with cerebral palsy and other disabilities, through a commitment to the principles of independence, inclusion and self-determination. The national organization and its nationwide network of more than 100 affiliates in 37 states, and the District of Columbia.
The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD)	CCD is a coalition of approximately 100 national disability organizations working together to advocate for national public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society.
The National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD)	NCLD works to ensure that the nation's 15 million children, adolescents, and adults with learning disabilities have every opportunity to succeed in school, work, and life.
The Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)	AUCD is a network of interdisciplinary centers advancing policy and practice for and with individuals with developmental and other disabilities, their families, and communities.
The National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)	NDRN is the nonprofit membership organization for the federally mandated Protection and Advocacy (P&A) Systems and Client Assistance Programs (CAP). Collectively, the P&A/CAP network is the largest provider of legally based advocacy services to people with disabilities in the U.S.