



Transition

A Lifelong Process

Transition is a process that involves changes in the passage from one environment to another and occurs at important milestones throughout a student's life, such as transitioning from home to school, from grade to grade, from school to school, or from school to community.

Planning for transition helps ensure successful entry into school, supports students to remain in school, and at the end of public schooling, provides a plan for taking the next step in their lives. Input from parents and guardians is an important part of transition planning to share information about what works well and areas where the student is struggling. All major aspects of the student's life should be considered.

Transition planning may be necessary for any students who have an Individual Program Plan (IPP). It may also be important for students who do not have an IPP but whose special needs related to transitioning must be addressed. Transition Outcomes (which, if needed, are included in an IPP) and Transition Plans (developed for students who do not have an IPP) are developed and documented in TIENET (Technology for Improving Education Network), Nova Scotia's online student services information system.

- > **Transition Outcomes** must be written to meet criteria outlined in *Transition Planning for Students with Special Needs: The Early Years through to Adult Life* (Nova Scotia Department of Education 2005, 15).
- > **Self-advocacy** is facilitated when students are involved in transition planning. They become knowledgeable about and able to explain their strengths, challenges, and aspirations.
- > **The Program Planning Process** is a team approach to share information and plan learning outcomes and supports to meet students' individual needs.

Effective transition planning involves

- clear understanding of a student's strengths, challenges, interests, and goals while at the same time, respecting diversity and equity
- identification of areas requiring transition support, such as self-advocacy, academics, employment, and social-emotional skills
- collaboration through the Program Planning Process between home, school, and community
- knowledge of community-based programs and services
- accurate record keeping on TIENET to track, monitor, and review the Transition Plan and process

Home-to-school transition planning should consider, but is not necessarily limited to

- inviting and supporting parents and guardians to become active participants in the Program Planning Process, including sharing information about preschool programs and services
- planning for individualized programming and services before attending school, when appropriate
- collaborating and sharing information between school staff and the student's support services (e.g., early intervention, pre-school programs, health professionals)
- supporting students to become comfortable with their new school, the routine, and their teachers

Grade-to-grade and teacher-to-teacher transition planning should consider, but is not necessarily limited to

- reviewing and updating individual assessment and programming information with new teachers
- ensuring documentation on TIENET is kept current
- supporting students and parents and guardians to become comfortable with new surroundings and new staff by arranging orientation activities
- addressing student concerns associated with anticipated changes

- > Additional information can be obtained from *Transition Planning for Students with Special Needs: The Early Years through to Adult Life* (Nova Scotia Department of Education 2005), available at studentservices.ednet.ns.ca.
- > To gain knowledge of community-based programming and services, the Program Planning Team will need to assess what their community has to offer to meet the educational, employment, and other requirements of youth.

School-to-school transition planning should consider, but is not necessarily limited to

- arranging meetings to address potential transition needs
- organizing and implementing orientation activities for individuals and groups of students
- exploring career interests and focusing on the establishment of a career plan, particularly as the student transitions to junior high and then to senior high
- supporting students in the selection of credits relative to strengths, challenges, interests, graduation requirements, and their post-high-school plans and options

School-to-community transition planning should consider, but is not necessarily limited to

- initiating planning as early as possible (age 14 or younger, when appropriate)
- identifying post-secondary school goals (such as education, employment, housing, transportation, financial management, and recreation)
- guiding students to provide them with opportunities to explore potential career options
- identifying school and community services that may assist the student in achieving personal goals by developing transition outcomes based on what the student wants to do and how they want to live and take part in the community
- assisting with the coordination of student assessments to provide what may be required for post-high-school program admissions, grants, or disability support programs and services

For more information about transition planning, please contact

School: School Principal

School Board: Student Services Coordinator

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development:
Student Services
(902) 424-7454

The Student Services fact sheets series and related policies, guidelines, and procedures may be found at studentservices.ednet.ns.ca.