



## Transition and Vocational Planning Program Guide for Staff, Students, and Families of The Henry Viscardi School



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**SPECIAL  
THANKS**

to Andrew Cohen, Esq. and Mitch Weisbrot, CLU,  
for donating the printing of this guide.

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Transition into the adult world can present challenges for all students. The process of transition is more difficult, however, for children with disabilities and requires unique strategies to enable each student to achieve the most independence in working, living, and participating in the community as adults. Students with special needs often have a difficult time deciding what they want to do and knowing what they will be able to do once they have finished high school. They move from a supportive and familiar entitlement program within their school to a world of adult services based on varying eligibility requirements. Making the transition from school to the adult world requires careful planning and a cooperative effort among families, school staff, and community service providers. Since students age out of the public school system at the end of the school year in which they turn 21, understanding the transition process is very important. Without a complete transition plan, your child could leave school without realistic goals for their future or without the skills needed to pursue further education, a job, needed community services, or independent living.

The New York State IEP addresses transition planning in two separate sections: Measurable Postsecondary Goals and Coordinated Set of Transition Activities. These two sections very clearly follow the requirements of the federal IDEA.

#### Postsecondary goals

Postsecondary goals are a student's long-term aspirations for living, working, and learning as an adult. They are based on the student's hopes for the future, as well as their individual needs. They should serve as the basis for mapping the student's transition from school to post-school activities. These goals provide guidance to the student, the family, and the school district when planning for activities and services that prepare the youth for adulthood. Postsecondary goals should be based on age-appropriate, formal and informal transition assessments. A thorough assessment of the individual student is required to develop appropriate planning goals. The IDEA states that goals must be developed in three essential areas: Education & Training, Employment, and Independent Living Skills.

#### Annual Goals

Once the student's postsecondary goals are established, they should be broken down into measurable, annual goals on the student's IEP. New York State has identified ten areas that should be considered when planning transition activities and services that address annual goals:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>education;</i>                         | 6. <i>medical/health;</i>                          |
| 2. <i>legal/advocacy;</i>                    | 7. <i>employment;</i>                              |
| 3. <i>personal independence/residential;</i> | 8. <i>transportation;</i>                          |
| 4. <i>recreation/leisure;</i>                | 9. <i>post-secondary/continuing education; and</i> |
| 5. <i>financial/income;</i>                  | 10. <i>other support needs.</i>                    |

Planning transition services cannot be done in isolation, but must reach beyond the school boundaries into the community. Planning must also reach beyond a student's limitations to explore each student's strengths, interests, hopes and dreams.

#### Vocational Assessments

The IEP team can use a variety of assessment approaches and tools to develop a full picture of a student's abilities and interests. These may include vocational evaluations, achievement tests, assessments of postsecondary skills, interviews with the student and/or parent, and teacher observations. All of these assessments can help the IEP team plan goals for the student's transition to adulthood. A vocational assessment is an evaluation that measures a student's interests and abilities in job-related areas. It incorporates information gathered from the student, parent, and teacher utilizing Vocational Assessment Interview forms and a review of school records to determine vocational skills, aptitudes, and interests.

### Level 1 Assessment (mandatory)

Although transition services must begin the year that the student turns age 15, or earlier, as appropriate, the New York State Education Department requires that a career assessment take place at age 12. This assessment is called a Level One assessment. This assessment sets the foundation for transition planning and services. The career assessment process is a team effort and should include the student, his or her family, and the student's teachers. The Level I Assessment identifies the starting point for the CSE to begin exploring career options with the student.

### Level 2 Vocational / Career Assessment

A Level 2 assessment may be recommended by the CSE at any time to determine the level of a student's vocational skills, aptitudes, and interests. A Level 2 can be conducted at any age, as appropriate, and can help with developing post-school employment and other post-school adult living objectives. Though it is recommended that a trained vocational evaluator or rehabilitation counselor administer or supervise this level of assessment, an experienced guidance counselor, special education teacher, or occupational education instructor can also be trained to conduct the assessment. This is accomplished through standardized or functional assessment techniques with emphasis placed on the techniques which prove to be most meaningful to the student and accurately reflect ability. Collected data could include: interest inventory, perception (visual/auditory/tactile), motor (dexterity, speed, tool use, strength, coordination), spatial discrimination, verbal (reading, writing, speaking, numerical (measurement, money skills), comprehension (task learning, problem solving), attention (staying on task), and learning styles.

### Level 3 Vocational/Career Assessment

This is a comprehensive vocational evaluation that uses work, real or simulated, as the basis for assessment and vocational counseling. A trained vocational evaluator should administer or supervise this level of assessment. Level 3 assessment options include:

Vocational Evaluation - Acquired abilities, aptitudes and interests are compared with specific performance criteria to predict potential vocational success. Work samples, must be valid and reliable.

Situational Vocational Assessment - Real work settings are used to enable the student to explore vocational aptitudes, to demonstrate the types of support services needed to enhance optimal performance, or to assist the student to acquire specific skills and abilities. This on-the-job assessment considers what has been learned and how, what aptitudes are demonstrated, and what training and support strategies are necessary for developing competencies.

### The New York State Career Plan

To earn the NYS CDOS [Career Development Occupational Studies] Commencement Credential, a student with a disability must have completed a commencement level Career Plan that includes documentation of the following:

*the student's self-identified career interests;*

*career-related strengths and needs;*

*career goals; and*

*CTE coursework and work-based learning experiences that the student plans to engage in to achieve those goals.*

The activities that the student includes in his/her Career Plan are not limited to those career-related activities that will be provided by the school and may include other activities that the student involves him or herself in outside of school (e.g., volunteer work or summer employment). The Career Plan records a student's knowledge and skill attainment. It documents a history of achievement that students build from elementary school to high school. The Career Plan design has also incorporated the transition planning process that is highly desirable for all students and required for students with disabilities. To ensure the student is actively engaged in career planning, the school must have evidence that the student has developed, annually reviewed, and, as appropriate, revised his/her career plan. Additionally, a student's preferences and interests as identified in his/her career plan must be reviewed annually and considered in the development of his/her IEP. While the career plan is a student-developed document, some students may require assistance in completing their career plans. How frequently a student works on his/her career plan will depend upon the individual student and his/her unique needs.

### Employability Profile

The school must ensure that the student has at least one work skills employability profile completed within one year prior to a student's exit from high school that documents the student's: employability skills and experiences; attainment of each of the commencement level CDOS learning standards for standards 1, 2 and 3a; and as appropriate, attainment of technical knowledge and work-related skills, work experiences, performance on industry-based assessments and other work-related and academic achievements. A copy of the student's employability profile(s) must be maintained in the student's permanent record. An employability profile will provide students with a better understanding of how others view their strengths and the skills they may need to continue to work on to realize their goals; summarizes their work-experiences, skills, abilities, knowledge, and talents to assist in the development of a resume; and provides potential employers with evidence of work-skills attained.

### Student Exit Summary:

It is intended for this summary to provide specific, meaningful and understandable information to the student, the student's family, and any agency, including postsecondary schools, that may provide services to the student upon transition. Schools are not required to conduct any new assessments or evaluations in order to provide the SES. The SES is a part of transition planning and provides the student with useful and relevant information about the student's skills and needs, as well as recommendations to support a successful transition to post-school opportunities.

### Transition Linkage Coordinators

You should also be aware of the role of transition linkage coordinators (TLCs). Some schools in the New York City public school system have a TLC, who plays an important role in the transition process. The TLC may serve as a liaison with outside agencies and help students with applications and other relevant transition activities. If your child's school does not have a transition linkage coordinator, these responsibilities will likely fall to his or her guidance counselor. For students in District 75 programs, if the program does not have a TLC located in the school, there are transition coordinators at the district level connected to each District 75 program. You should learn who your child's TLC or guidance counselor is and arrange to meet with that person to discuss the transition process.

### Graduation and Aging out of school-age services

#### Diploma Objectives

There are five high school diplomas & credentials available to students in New York:

- ✓ Regents Diploma
- ✓ Advanced Regents Diploma
- ✓ Local Diploma
- ✓ CDOS Credential
- ✓ SACC

(This list does not include the High School Equivalency Diploma, often referred to as the GED.)

By law, students with disabilities must be given the opportunity to earn a Regents Diploma whenever appropriate. To get a Regents Diploma, all students must earn at least 22 credits and pass Regents exams in English Language Arts, math, science, Global History and U.S. History with a 65 or above. Students can get an Advanced Regents diploma if they pass additional exams in math and science and additional credits and exams in a foreign language.

The Local Diploma is almost completely phased out for general education students. However, general education students who earn their required 22 credits, pass at least three of their Regents exams, and earn a 62, 63, or 64 on one or two of their remaining exams can appeal the lower scores and can seek a Local diploma if they meet other classwork and attendance requirements. Students with IEPs also have the opportunity to graduate from high school with a Local Diploma. In order to get a Local Diploma, these students must earn the required 22 credits, but can pass one or more Regents exams with a score of 55-64. In addition, students with disabilities who entered high school in September 2010 or earlier may earn a Local Diploma if they pass one or more Regents Competency Tests (RCTs), instead of the Regents exams. Finally, special education students can earn a Local Diploma with a score of 45-54 on certain Regents exams if they score above a 65 on another exam. Students with IEPs used to be able to earn something called an IEP Diploma. An IEP diploma is not really a high school diploma, but a certificate indicating that the student has met the goals on his IEP. IEP Diplomas are only appropriate for students with significant cognitive and developmental delays and should not have been awarded just because a student had trouble passing his Regents exams. If a student received an IEP Diploma, he can return to school to try for a regular diploma until the end of the school year in which he turns 21.

# HVS CURRICULUM

## CDOS [Career Development and Universal Foundation Skills ] standards and performance indicators.

*(Developed in a collaborative effort with the faculty,  
teachers, therapists, and staff of The Henry Viscardi School)*



The Transition and Vocational Core Curriculum of The Henry Viscardi School is aligned with the Career Development and Universal Foundation Skills guide from the New York State Education Department as follows:

1. Career Development (Standard 1) and Universal Foundation Skills (Standard 3a)
2. Integrated Learning (Standard 2)
3. Career Clusters (Standard 3b)

The CDOS learning standards engage students in preparing for future careers, in asking the probing questions that help determine future paths, and in mapping out a direction for gaining the skills and knowledge necessary for future success. We will organize this career journey through a series of questions that require students to investigate and apply knowledge through essential questions. Essential questions identify the basics of what students should know and be able to do. They provide the conceptual priorities for instruction. As organizers, essential questions provide the focus for teaching and learning. They identify what is “essential” for learning and focus instruction in that direction. Because they are written in a conceptual format, essential questions allow for natural linkages among the various CDOS standards and other learning standards. Additionally, they are written in a way that engages students in their own learning and provides a connection to their present and future lives. The following questions are examples of this direct connection between students’ lives and their future roles in society:

- Who am I? (Elementary)
- How are my social skills related to my future success? (Intermediate)
- How do my career choices affect the systems in which I operate? (Commencement)

Integrated Learning activities are embedded into the fabric of the content areas that are taught at every grade level across each child’s school career. They are designed to integrate CDOS with other content areas which as a result, provide vast possibilities of content combinations and instructional approaches. Our curriculum reflects a synthesis of the skills, concepts, and competencies embedded in the State standards. The scope and sequence for the standard of Career Clusters, reflects the body of knowledge that all students in that particular career major should acquire regardless of area of specialty beyond the core.



**The Transition and Vocational Core Curriculum of The Henry Viscardi School will maintain integrity to the following quality indicators:**

- Learning experiences have real-life application.
- Lessons are authentic and project-based.
- Lessons are experiential in nature.
- Lessons are hands-on.
- The Henry Viscardi School will integrate the facilitation of independent mobility to the greatest extent possible. Our staff recognizes that functional mobility during life and vocational planning requires adaptation to physical and social features and time constraints associated with home, school, and community settings. We recognize that experience, not maturation alone, drives perceptual-cognitive development and that self-induced movement is critical in evoking advancements in a number of important cognitive processes, including those required for transition and vocational planning.
- Students are able to connect present learning to future goals.
- Students explore various career paths without limiting their choices.
- Students engage in career role-playing.
- Students learn and then apply skills they learn in school.
- Students participate in entrepreneurial endeavors in the school environment.
- Students integrate knowledge with experience.
- Students offer comments of how much they are looking forward to their future careers because classroom activities are relevant to the real world.



## Elementary Transition and Vocational Core Curriculum of The Henry Viscardi School

Career Development	Integrated Learning	Universal Foundation Skills
1. Career Plan	1. Identify academic knowledge and skills	1. Basic Skills
2. Awareness of Interests, Aptitudes, and Abilities	2. Demonstrate differences	2. Thinking Skills
3. Value of Work	3. Solve problems	3. Personal Qualities
4. Changing Nature of Workplace		4. Interpersonal Skills
5. Exploring Preferences		5. Technology
6. Relationship of Decision Making		6. Managing Information
7. Changing Roles		7. Managing Resources
		8. Systems

### Elementary Essential questions:

- Who am I?
- Why do I need to learn?
- How does my current learning prepare me for my life experiences?
- Why do I need to work?
- How do I find out what I need to know to become an effective worker?
- What do I need to discover about myself that will allow me to handle change in the workplace?
- Why is it important to interact with others?
- How do I apply knowledge to become a successful worker in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

## Kindergarten through 4<sup>th</sup> Grade:

- **Students begin a career plan that would assist in the transition from school to eventual entry into a career option.**
  - A. Key elements of a career plan should include the student's documenting the following:
    1. Personal data
    2. Knowledge
      - a. Who am I?
        - i. Interests
        - ii. Abilities and areas to strengthen
- **Students demonstrate an awareness of their interests, aptitudes, and abilities.**
  - A. Develop a personal assessment plan:
    1. List areas of strength
    2. List areas in need of improvement
    3. Identify personal learning style
    4. Identify career clusters related to interests, aptitudes, and abilities
  - B. Create an emerging career folder (e.g., interest inventories, checklists, awards, certificates, letters of recommendation, pictures, reflections, etc.).
- **Students know the value of work to the individual and society in general.**
  - A. Identify basic economic principles:
    1. Differences between needs and wants
    2. Relationship of needs/wants to financial resources
    3. Awareness of the circular flow of money
    4. Differences between paid and unpaid work
  - B. Engage in basic workplace behaviors (*academic and real-world*):
    1. Identify personal qualities that lead to responsible behavior (e.g., personal fitness and hygiene, respect for self and others, honesty, integrity, dependability, punctuality, positive self-esteem, tolerance, stress management)
    2. Recognize the connection between effort and achievement
    3. Demonstrate the effective use of time
    4. Manage resources
    5. Apply organization strategies
    6. Demonstrate independent work habits
    7. Engage in cooperative learning activities
    8. Identify decision-making skills and problem-solving strategies (e.g., conflict management, peer mediation)
    9. Acquire and apply effective communication skills
    10. Develop leadership qualities
  - C. Identify the relationship between lifestyle choices and future career paths:
    1. Career choices associated with geographic locations
    2. Hobbies, interests, and earnings
    3. Work environments (e.g., indoor vs. outdoor, physical vs. mental, working with others vs. working alone, travel vs. stationary)
- **Students describe the changing nature of the workplace brought about by global competition and technology.**
  - A. Discuss how the 21st century impacts their workplace environment:
    1. Identify ways in which technology has changed the world of work
    2. List careers that rely upon modern technology
    3. Discuss how worldwide trade changes the workplace in America
    4. List the strategies to manage change in daily life
    5. List the different types of economies (e.g., agrarian, industrial, information, and idea)
    6. List skills and abilities needed in a highly skilled technological workplace

- **Students explore their preferences for working with people, information, and/or things.**
  - A. Discuss the difference between independent work and teamwork:
    1. Identify factors that influence work preferences
    2. Identify the different types of jobs available based upon working styles (e.g., sedentary work, physical labor, high-risk work)
    3. Discuss the various working conditions that affect job choice
- **Students demonstrate understanding of the relationship of decision making to the attainment of future goals.**
  - A. Identify the steps in the decision-making process to accomplish goals.
  - B. Acquire strategies involved in the decision-making process.
  - C. Discuss the role of beliefs and attitudes in the decision-making process.
  - D. Describe the consequences of making decisions.
  - E. Reflect upon the relationship between academic success and real-world success.
- **Students describe the changing roles of men and women at home and in the workplace.**
  - A. Identify their roles in the home environment and workplace.
  - B. List the roles and occupations of men and women in the workplace:
    1. Distinguish between traditional and nontraditional roles and occupations of men and women at home and in the workforce
    2. Discuss the value of work in the home and workplace
  - C. Identify the factors that affect change in the work environment (e.g., assembly line vs. shared decision-making process, downsizing, technological advancement).

### **In addition to the above, students in Kindergarten - 4<sup>th</sup> grades will:**

- Learn to be responsible for personal property (clothing, medical supplies, etc.)
- Learn school rules/jobs ( line leader, garbage collector, etc.)
- Learn social niceties and interactions with peers and adults (please, thank-you)
- Learn about communities and community helpers
- Transition towards independence by becoming self-feeders (if possible) and other ADL skills
- Play an active role in a community i.e. fundraising for a charity.
- Lesson integration, which includes socialization, rules, different kinds of careers, and understanding communities
- Disability awareness
- Interview an individual in a related field that the student has selected as their career choice.



## Intermediate and Middle School Transition and Vocational Core Curriculum of The Henry Viscardi School



Career Development	Integrated Learning	Universal Foundation Skills
1. Career Plan	1. Apply academic knowledge and skills	1. Basic Skills
2. Relationship among Interests, Aptitudes, and Abilities, and Career Research	2. Solve problems that call for applying academic knowledge	2. Thinking Skills
3. Relationship among Interests, Aptitudes, and Abilities, and Successful Employment	3. Use academic knowledge and skills in an occupational context	3. Personal Qualities
4. Changing Nature of Work and Educational Requirements		4. Interpersonal Skills
5. Relationship of Personal Choices to Career Decision Making		5. Technology
		6. Managing Information
		7. Managing Resources
		8. Systems

### Intermediate and Middle School Essential Questions:

- Who am I as a citizen?
- How are my school experiences connected to my future success?
- How is work important to me?
- How do I develop the skills and abilities that I need to be successful in a career?
- Why do the choices I make now matter to my future?
- How do I find out what I need to know?
- How do I affect the systems within which I live and work?

## Age 12-14

- Administer initial vocational assessment
- Discuss the following curriculum areas at IEP meetings
- In the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Media Technology class, a Graphic artist will visit to speak to class about jobs, skills, training, education required.
- In the 8<sup>th</sup> grade video editing class, students will assume roles such as director, producer, actor, scriptwriter, and cinematographer and will carry out responsibilities during the video production process.
- Job application and interviewing skills
  1. *Writing a resume*
  2. *Writing a cover letter*
  3. *Practicing interviews – “looking & speaking the part”*
- Develop and implement strategies to increase responsibilities and independence at home.
- ❖ *Academic*
- ❖ *Social*
- ❖ *Language/communication*
- ❖ *Occupational*
- ❖ *Self-help skills*
- ❖ *Self-advocacy skills*



## Secondary (Commencement Level) Transition and Vocational Core Curriculum of The Henry Viscardi School



Career Development	Integrated Learning	Universal Foundation Skills
1. Complete development of career plan	1. Demonstrate integration and application	1. Basic Skills
2. Apply decision-making skills in selection of a career option	2. Use academic knowledge and skills	2. Thinking Skills
3. Analyze skills and abilities in a career option	3. Research, interpret, analyze, and evaluate information	3. Personal Qualities
		4. Interpersonal Skills
		5. Technology
		6. Managing Information
		7. Managing Resources
		8. Systems

### Secondary/Commencement Level Essential Questions:

- Who am I as a worker in the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- How do I know whether I am prepared for lifelong learning?
- How do I know if I am prepared for change?
- How do I access information in an efficient manner?
- How do I present myself to others?
- How will personal reflection aid in the development and implementation of my career goals?
- How do my career choices affect the systems in which I operate?

## Age 14

- Student is to be in attendance at the IEP meetings or appropriate documentation must be included in the IEP.
- Introduce & discuss Transition Services
- (Student) develops an increased understanding of his/her disability and its educational implications.
- At the IEP meeting, potential transition service needs are addressed and possible “courses of study” in relation to student’s desired post-school goals are to be discussed.
- The IEP needs to be written in the “transitional format”.
- Include outside service providers in the IEP process (i.e., human services, work coordinator, etc.)
- Alumni visits to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade classes to discuss post-secondary outcomes, skills, experiences, and careers
- Career and Financial Management Coursework—Grade 9

- ❖ *Self-information – skills, aptitudes, interests, abilities, work values*
- ❖ *Decision Making*
- ❖ *Lifestyle Goals*
- ❖ *Entrepreneurship/Form of Business Ownership*
- ❖ *Workplace Ethics*
- ❖ *Job Search*
- ❖ *Applying for a job*
- ❖ *Resumes, Working Papers, Cover Letters, Job Applications*

- ❖ *Interviewing*
- ❖ *Beginning a new job – W-4 forms,*
- ❖ *Expectations of Employers*
- ❖ *Worker’s Rights and Protections*
- ❖ *OSHA, ADA, FMLA, etc.*
- ❖ *Job Earnings and Paychecks*
- ❖ *The Economic World*
- ❖ *Banking and Credit*
- ❖ *Financial Institutions*

- ❖ *Checking Accounts*
- ❖ *Credit and its Use*
- ❖ *Budgeting, Savings and Investing*
- ❖ *Insurance*
- ❖ *Taxes and Social Security*
- ❖ *Career Research throughout year*

## Age 15

- Enroll in driver’s training course or apply for a state ID card.
- Participate in career awareness activities.
- Develop transportation/mobility strategies.
- Contact the work experience coordinator for possible future involvement.
- Notify parents that transition services will be incorporated into the IEP beginning at age 15.
- Obtain parental consent so that the appropriate adult agency representative can be involved.
- Develop transition component of IEP and annually thereafter.

Assure that copies of work-related documents are available:

- ❖ *Birth certificate*
- ❖ *Social Security card*

## Age 16

- This is the age at which federal laws require that transition services begin.
- Where appropriate, investigate Supplemental Security Income (SSI), medical assistance, and/or income support.
- If appropriate, investigate legal representation (i.e., guardianship, conservatorship, wills, trusts).
- Begin investigation of post high school educational/training opportunities.
- Be an active participant at his/her IEP meeting.
- Complete Transfer of Rights/Responsibilities process.
- Consider summer employment/volunteer experience
- Explore community leisure activities.
- Consider the need for residential opportunities, including completing applications, as appropriate.
- Obtain personal ID card.

## Age 17

- Apply for Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS).
- Apply for post-secondary educational programs.
- Research adult living situation.
- (Student) demonstrate an understanding of how his/her rights and responsibilities change at the “Age of Majority”.
- Transportation: Develop Transportation/Mobility Strategies:
  - ❖ *independent Travel Skills Training*
  - ❖ *Public or Paratransit Transportation*
  - ❖ *Needs for Travel Attendant*
- Coursework: Math for Independent Living Grade -12. This class includes the following topics:
  - ❖ *Getting a job*
  - ❖ *Map reading*
  - ❖ *Traveling*
  - ❖ *Choosing a place to live*
  - ❖ *Paying Bills*
  - ❖ *Shopping for Food (Including online practice with peapod)*
  - ❖ *Credit Cards*

## Age 18

- Register for the Selective Service.
- Register to vote.
- Develop & update employment plans.
- Involve ACCES-VR, as appropriate, within 2 years of school exit.
- Research possible adult living situations.
- Investigate post-school opportunities (further educational vocational training, college, military, etc.)
- Apply for post-school college & other training programs.
- Run his/her own IEP meeting and assist in the writing of the IEP.
- Apply for Supplemental Security Income (SSI), guardianship, medical assistance, and/or income support.
- Review health insurance coverage: inform insurance company of son/daughter's disability & investigate rider of continued eligibility.
- Where appropriate, affirm that plans are in places for the following areas:
  - ❖ *Post-secondary/Continuing Education*
  - ❖ *Employment*
  - ❖ *Legal/Advocacy*
  - ❖ *Recreation/Leisure*
  - ❖ *Medical/Health*
  - ❖ *Counseling*
  - ❖ *Financial/Income*



# INFORMATION FOR PARENTS and FAMILIES

## Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Commencement Credential

Students with IEPs can now earn something called a Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Commencement Credential. The CDOS Credential is intended to indicate a student's readiness for entry-level jobs. It can be awarded either in addition to a Regents or Local diploma or to a student with a disability who is unable to earn a Regents or Local diploma. The CDOS Credential is not a diploma and cannot be used to apply to college, the military, or trade schools. If a student receives a CDOS Credential, he or she can always return to school until he or she receives a Regents or Local diploma or until he or she turns 21, whichever happens first.

## Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential (SACC)

Finally, students with severe disabilities can earn a Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential (SACC). SACC is available to students with severe disabilities who take the New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) and do not meet the requirements for a Regents or Local diploma. Students who receive the SACC will receive a certificate, an exit summary documenting their strengths, level of achievement, and interests. SACC is not a diploma and cannot be used to apply to college, the military, or trade schools.

## Adult Agencies

Every child with a disability and an IEP has the right to stay in school until the end of the school year in which he or she turns 21. At the same time, they should be referred to appropriate outside agencies during the final years of school. These agencies can arrange for additional training, education, or placement services upon their exit from the public school system. It is important for parents and families to monitor this responsibility. The following are important agencies to know about:

- **Adult Career and Continuing Education Services – Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR)**  
ACCES-VR, formerly known as VESID, provides vocational rehabilitation services to prepare people with disabilities for various job settings. Individuals must apply and be found eligible for ACCES-VR services in order to receive services from the agency. School personnel will help them apply to ACCES-VR. ACCES-VR offers a variety of programs to help students prepare for employment settings, including job training, payment for post-secondary education, sheltered employment, supportive employment, and competitive employment. In addition, ACCES-VR can help your child develop independent living skills. For more information, visit: <http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr>.
- **Office of People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)**  
OPWDD, formerly known as OMRDD, provides a variety of services for individuals with developmental disabilities, including intellectual disabilities, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome and autism spectrum disorders. Services may range from assistance with employment opportunities to funding attendance at day programs. In order to receive services, you must complete an application for your child and submit required documentation of your child's disability, such as psycho-education evaluations and medical reports. OPWDD offers services to people of all ages, but if your child has not been receiving OPWDD services, an application should be completed at least two years before their exit from the public school system. For more information, visit: <http://www.opwdd.ny.gov/>.

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

OMH provides various services, including mental health counseling, to individuals with mental health disabilities. OMH offers various resources for the transition process, such as information on educational and vocational sites, housing opportunities, employment, or life skills training sites. For more information, visit: [http://www.omh.ny.gov/omhweb/consumer\\_affairs/transition\\_youth/resources/](http://www.omh.ny.gov/omhweb/consumer_affairs/transition_youth/resources/).

- **Social Security Administration (SSA)**

The SSA operates the federally-funded program that provides benefits to people of any age who have a significant impairment because of a mental or physical disability. Adults also must be unable to do substantial work to qualify for some programs. Some programs that the SSA offers for people with disabilities include Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Plans to Achieve Self-Support (PASS), Medicaid, and Medicare. For more information, visit: [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov).

- **Client Assistance Program (CAP)** is a statewide network of skilled advocates that help New Yorkers with disabilities get the training, equipment, and services they need to be employed. They advise individuals with disabilities about their rights and responsibilities as clients or applicants for vocational rehabilitation services and can help mediate disputes between clients and rehabilitation services agencies or facilities. For more information, visit <http://www.access.nyed.gov/vr/do/cap.htm> or call (212) 674-2300.

- **Independent Living Centers** are stationed throughout the NYC area. Each center offers different types of programs to help adults with disabilities become self-sufficient. Assistance is provided to find jobs, housing, and benefits. For more information, visit the ACCES-VR website.

- **New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI)** is the Protection and Advocacy office for the New York City area. They can assist people with disabilities with a variety of legal issues involving disability rights, including problems with housing, employment, and building access. They also can provide information to parents petitioning for guardianship of their adult child. For more information, visit <http://www.nylpi.org/> or call (212) 244-4664.

## Notes:

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## Helpful Websites and Resources

- **Andrew Cohen, Esq. and Mitch Weisbrot, CLU-Special Needs Financial Planning**  
Addresses the legal and financial preparations crucial to safeguarding assets and benefits for your child with special needs. <http://www.amcohenlaw.com/> or <http://www.financialguide.com/mitch-weisbrot>
- **Long Island (LIDDSO)**  
Agencies and types of services offered in the LI region  
<http://www.lifssac.com/resources/2012+Agency+List.pdf>
- **Long Island Medicaid and Non-Medicaid Service Coordination**  
[http://www.lifssac.com/resources/\\$40+MSC+Vendor+2-12-2013.pdf](http://www.lifssac.com/resources/$40+MSC+Vendor+2-12-2013.pdf)
- **Career Zone**  
<https://careerzone.ny.gov/views/careerzone/index.jsf>  
Career Zone is an online tool to help you explore your career path by choosing careers related to a student's strengths, skills and talents. The website is divided into six clusters: arts and humanities; business and information systems; engineering and technology; health services; natural and agricultural sciences; and human and public services.
- **New York Self-Determination Coalition (NYSELFD)**  
A group of parents and professionals who care about and support self-determined people with developmental disabilities. They are not funded or sponsored by any governmental or voluntary agency. Their mission is to promote self-determined lives for people with developmental disabilities. This website: Shares families' experiences with self-determination; Updates on political issues that affect self-determination; Alerts to interesting conferences and resources; and Answers family questions (or refer you to someone who can) <http://nyselfd.org/>
- **National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities**  
<http://nichcy.org/wp-content/uploads/docs/ts10.pdf>  
Guide to "Transition Planning: A Team Effort" is a national guide to developing effective transition plans. The guide offers creative ways to think about transition planning and includes a long list of additional resources at the end.
- **The ARISE Coalition**  
The ARISE Coalition's website links to information for families of students with disabilities in New York City and features a dedicated page outlining the rights of students and families in transition planning and provides a list of free resources for students looking for academic support and assistance in job training and placement as they transition to life after high school. [http://arisecoalition.org/transition\\_planning.php](http://arisecoalition.org/transition_planning.php)
- "Transition Services: A Planning and Implementation Guide," created by ACCESS-VR, is available at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/transition/guide.htm>.
- The Transition Planning Timeline, which appears on the following page of this guidebook, is also available at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/transition/guide.htm#trans>

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