

Module 8

Supporting Student *Transition*

from School to Post-Secondary
Education and Employment



This module provides information to support the transition planning process for students with learning disabilities, including an outline of the steps involved in effective transitions.

● Key Ideas in this Module

This module provides:

- an outline of the steps involved in effective transitions;
- transition guidelines for students who are starting school, changing grades, and moving from high school to adult life;
- transition planning tools for students.

● Transition Planning Process

Students go through different stages of transition during their school years: preschool to school, early years to middle years, middle years to senior years, and senior years to life after graduation. Transition planning is most effective when the student, parents, and the school team work together to develop a plan that meets the student's needs. The student is always the central member of the transition team.

Planning for each school transition follows the same process as individual education planning (IEP). In Manitoba, IEP is a global term for any written plan developed by a team to address the individual needs of a student. School teams, including families, are likely to be familiar with the IEP process. Often, school divisions will use the IEP template and include transition-related outcomes in the IEP.

For more information about the IEP process, please see the following links:

Manitoba Education: *Student-Specific Planning: A Handbook for Developing and Implementing Individual Education Plans (IEPs)*. Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, 2010. Available online at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/documents.html.

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. *Working Together: A Handbook for Parents of Children with Special Needs in School*. Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2004. Available online at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/documents.html.

Transition planning consists of four steps that are consistent with the individual education planning process.

1. Set direction.
2. Gather information.
3. Develop the transition plan.
4. Implement and review the transition plan.

1) Setting Direction

Teacher/case managers responsible for transition planning begin by identifying key members of the transition planning process. This includes the student, their parents/caregivers, and others who have been or will be involved with the student as they make this transition. Once team members have been identified, the team sets the direction for the transition plan. Setting direction involves the following:

- orienting team members regarding the transition process;
- clarifying members' roles and responsibilities;
- deciding on a process for collaborating and sharing information.

2) Gathering Information

The planning team uses ongoing observation and assessment to monitor the student's transition needs and the related curricular outcomes. The team may gather information about the following:

- the student's hopes, interests, aptitudes, and vision for the future;
- the student and his/her family and community background (e.g., language, culture, etc.);
- the student's experiences, strengths, and needs;
- the student's current level of academic performance;
- the skills and knowledge the student requires for successful transition;
- the availability of services and resources;
- the student's ongoing requirements for adaptations or assistive technology.

The team may use the following methods to gather information:

- curriculum-based assessments;
- work samples;
- interviews with the student, parent(s), teacher(s), and/or other support staff;
- inventories or checklists from the student, parent(s), teacher(s), and/or other support staff;
- specific observations of the student in various settings (e.g., classroom, home, etc.);
- existing documents (e.g., student school records, previous assessments, student-developed portfolio);
- assessment of the student's specific skills in real life settings (e.g., vocational, academic);
- diagnostic assessments (formal or informal cognitive assessments or adaptive assessments);

3) Developing the Transition Plan

The transition planning team can provide support in the following areas:

- identifying the student's interests, strengths, and needs;
- supporting the development of skills for self-determination and self-advocacy (For more information related to self-advocacy, refer to [Module 7](#));
- teaching the needed skills for continuing education (e.g., effective study strategies, computer literacy skills, communication);
- helping students develop employability skills;
- working with students to expand resumes and career portfolios;
- adjusting students' employment expectations; exploring employment options, and narrowing students' job search focus.

4) Implement and Review the Transition Plan

Effective implementation of a transition plan requires that instructional strategies and identified learning outcomes are clearly understood by all team members. Implementation of the plan involves the following:

- securing appropriate co-operation, partnership, resources, and services;
- maintaining ongoing communication with the student, parent(s), and other team members;
- monitoring student progress;
- revising and adapting the plan as necessary;
- communicating progress and outcomes of the plan with team members;
- reviewing and updating the plan at least on an annual basis.

Adapted from: Healthy Child Manitoba. *Bridging to Adulthood: A Protocol for Transitioning Students with Exceptional Needs from School to Community*. Winnipeg, MB: Healthy Child Manitoba, Mar. 2008. 35. Available on the Healthy Child Manitoba website at www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/publications/ and on the Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning website at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/plan_part.html.

● Early Years Transitions

- Help students become comfortable with new surroundings and people by arranging for them to visit new classrooms and teachers.
- Prepare students for new environments by identifying the skills they will need and providing opportunities for them to learn those skills.
- Involve parent(s) in transition planning and help them advocate for their children.

- Listen to students' concerns about transitions; engage them in frequent discussions about a transition and emphasize positive aspects of a new environment.
- Establish consistent homework and study routines; encourage students to be independent learners and praise their efforts to take responsibility for their own learning.

● Middle Years Transitions

- Encourage students to discover their learning strengths.
- Teach students to become self-advocates and to explain their learning needs to others. (For more information related to self-advocacy, refer to [Module 7](#).)
- Involve students in transition planning by allowing them to actively participate in goal-setting.
- Help students learn to monitor their own academic progress and share their perceptions with the transition planning team.
- Teach students effective organization and study strategies such as time management, note-taking, test preparation, and test-taking strategies.
- Help students explore appropriate adaptations and assistive technologies.

● Preparing for Post-Secondary Education and Training Options

Many students choose post-secondary education after high school. Post-secondary institutions often require prerequisites for acceptance that involve long-term planning, such as the acquisition of certain course credits or skills. The transition planning team may support students in the following ways:

- Help students understand the entrance requirements for post-secondary institutions.
- Help students through the application process.
- Identify disability services available in post-secondary institutions.

Manitoba's post-secondary education institutions include information on their websites that may be useful to future students under headings such as the following:

- Student services;
- Admissions requirements;
- Accessibility services;
- Assessment services;
- Campus life;

- Career planning;
- Disability services.

Students who do not choose post-secondary education may benefit from other community programs or training opportunities after graduation. The transition planning team should ensure that the student and family are able to access information on available community resources.

Additional information to facilitate planning for high school students is available in the following Manitoba documents:

- Healthy Child Manitoba. *Bridging to Adulthood: A Protocol for Transitioning Students with Exceptional Needs from School to Community*. Winnipeg, Manitoba: Healthy Child Manitoba, March 2008. www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/plan_part.html.
- Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. *Focus on the Future: A Parent and Student Guide to Senior Years Graduation Requirements*. Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. 2008. www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/cardev/resources.html.
- Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. *Focus on the Future: Career Planning Begins at Home*. Winnipeg, Manitoba: Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. 2005. www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/cardev/resources.html.
- MB4Youth connects young adults to services and programs related to everything from education to jobs, from driver licensing programs to environmental projects. Visit www.gov.mb.ca/cyo/youth/index.html.

Manitoba Post-Secondary Supports for Individuals with Learning Disabilities

Many post-secondary institutions in Manitoba provide services to students with learning disabilities, as well as other specific needs. Please refer to the following websites for more information.

- **Assiniboine Community College – Accessibility and Disability Services**
<http://assiniboine.net/students/accessibility-disability>
- **Brandon University – Student Accessibility Services**
<https://www.brandonu.ca/student-services/disability-services/>
- **Red River Community College – Student Services – Applied Learning**
www.rrc.ca/student-services
- **University College of the North – Learner’s Assistance Centre**
<https://www.ucn.ca/sites/studentdevelopment/lac/Pages/Learner’s-Assistance-Centre.aspx>

- **University of Manitoba – Student Accessibility Services**
<http://umanitoba.ca/student/saa/accessibility/>.
- **University of Winnipeg – Accessibility Services and the Accessibility Resource Centre**
www.uwinnipeg.ca/accessibility-services/.

Canada Student Grant for Students with Permanent Disabilities

The Canada Student Grant for Students with Permanent Disabilities is a grant that provides students with \$2,000, each school year (August 1 to July 31). This grant can be obtained for each year of the student’s studies (including undergraduate and graduate levels) as long as they continue to meet the eligibility requirements.

www.canlearn.ca/eng/loans_grants/grants/disabilities.shtml

● Module Summary

The planning and implementation of transitions is a collaborative and comprehensive process which involves students as well as parent(s). There are many benefits to effective transition planning for all students, including students with learning disabilities. These include the following:

- continuity of programming across settings and grades;
- student awareness, preparedness, and understanding of expectations in new environments;
- school personnel who are knowledgeable about the needs of students transitioning into their classrooms.

Adapted from: Alberta Learning. *Unlocking Potential: Key Components of Programming for Students with Learning Disabilities*. Edmonton, Alberta: Alberta Learning, 2002.

<https://archive.education.alberta.ca>.

● References

Alberta Learning. *Unlocking Potential: Key Components of Programming for Students with Learning Disabilities*. Edmonton, AB: Alberta Learning, 2002.
<https://archive.education.alberta.ca>.

Healthy Child Manitoba. *Bridging to Adulthood: A Protocol for Transitioning Students with exceptional Needs from School to Community*. Winnipeg, MB: Healthy Child Manitoba, Mar. 2008. www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/publications, and www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/plan_part.html.

