

Secondary Transition IEP Review Rubric

Purpose

This resource contains points to consider when completing the compliance review for each question in the annual Secondary Transition IEP Components report application. This rubric is intended to be an optional companion tool to the Secondary Transition IEP Review Form. Much of this information is also provided through hover prompts within the Secondary IEP application in the Education Data System (EDS) as well as in the accompanying Application User Guide. These materials are all found on the [Special Education Data Reporting and Collections](#) webpage.

Updates to this Form

The Secondary Transition IEP Review Rubric was updated in 2025 to include: (a) recommendations to meet requirements and (b) common areas of noncompliance. While the examples provided clarify minimum standards for compliance, they can also serve as a foundation for strengthening IEP transition planning that is **student-centered, specific, and aligned to postsecondary goals**.

- The  symbol for sections that are common areas of noncompliance. Each section marked with this symbol includes examples from the 2024-25 Secondary IEP Transition Components reports submitted by LEAs in which the LEA misidentified compliance or non-compliance.
- The  symbol describes the practices that both meet requirements and support student progress towards their postsecondary goals.

It is important to note that the examples and non-examples provided in this rubric are intended to clarify the minimum standard for compliance with the requirements of federal performance Indicator B-13. They are not meant to reflect best or recommended practices for secondary transition planning. To explore best practices, please review the [Writing Effective Transition Plan](#) self-paced modules from the Center for Change in Transition Services (CCTS).

General Guidance

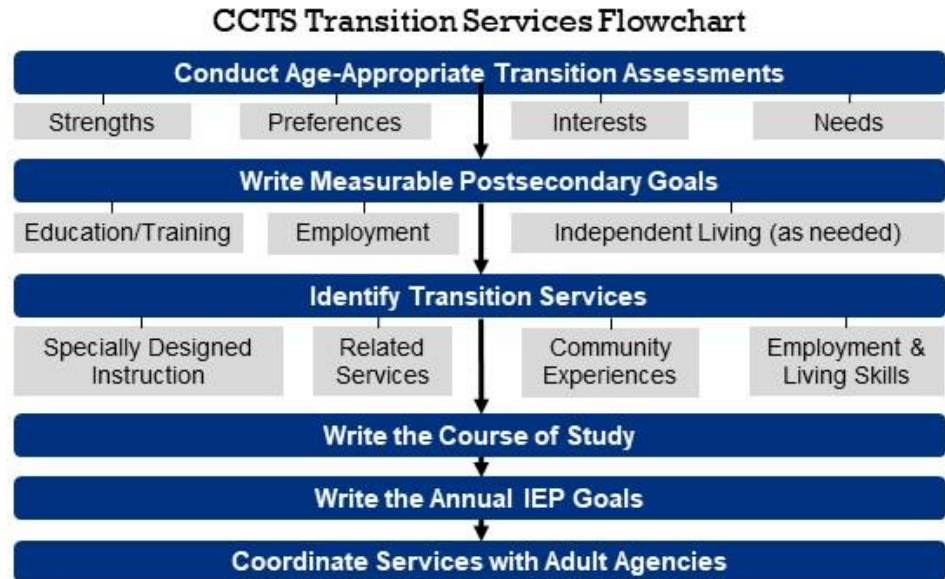
- Keep in mind that important information might be found in different sections of the IEP. Take time to make sure each question in the report application includes all the relevant details before finalizing your review.
 - For example, Transition Assessments may note education or employment goals, while the Course of Study may include independent living goals.
- LEAs and school teams are reminded that all sections of an IEP Transition Plan must be:
 - sufficiently specific to support the student in making reasonable progress¹ towards their postsecondary goals.
 - clear for all members of the IEP (including students and parents) to understand and implement.

¹ WAC 392-172A-03090, U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District*



Guidance on Logical Sequence and Flow of Transition Services

The CCTS graphic above illustrates how the six components of transition planning connect in sequence, with a comprehensive, age-appropriate transition assessment forming the foundation for all other elements.



The transition plan is cyclical and interconnected. Each component builds upon the last: assessment informs goals, goals shape services, services align to course of study, annual goals track skill growth, and agency coordination ensures sustainability. Teams should revisit and refine these connections at least annually as the student develops.

- Age-appropriate **transition assessments** form the foundation. Robust assessments gather data on students' strengths, preferences, interests, and needs (SPIN). This ensures postsecondary goals are individualized and meaningful.
- **Postsecondary goals** must directly reflect assessment data. Education/training, employment, and (if appropriate) independent living skills goals should flow naturally from assessment findings and align with the student's aspirations.
- **Transition services** provide the bridge between goals and skill-building. Once goals are established, services (specially designed instruction, related services, community experiences, employment preparation, and daily living skills) are selected to reasonably enable the student to achieve their postsecondary goals.
- The **course of study** outlines the academic and functional pathway. Coursework, CTE sequences, work-based learning, and other planned experiences should connect directly to the postsecondary goals, moving beyond simply documenting graduation requirements.
- **Annual IEP goals** operationalize transition needs into measurable steps. Academic, functional, and behavioral goals should target skill development needed for postsecondary success and align with identified transition services. These goals serve as actionable benchmarks that show the student's progress toward longer-term outcomes.
- **Coordination with adult agencies** ensures continuity of supports. With parent/adult student consent, representatives from adult service agencies should be invited when appropriate. Early coordination reduces gaps in services as students exit high school.

Secondary Transition IEP Scoring Rubric

1. Transition Assessment

Question 1: Is there evidence that the measurable postsecondary goal(s) were based on age-appropriate transition assessments related to education/training, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills?

- The transition assessment must address the student's **strengths, preferences, interests and needs** (SPIN).
- Assessment sources may be from formal measures (such as interest or aptitude tests, etc.) or informal measures (such as student or family interviews, observations of the student, etc.).
- The assessment does not need to be specifically labeled "education/training", "employment", or "independent living" in order to be compliant.

Common reasons for a "**no**" response include:

- There is no evidence of transition assessment results in the student's IEP, student file, current evaluation report, or High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP).
- The transition assessment information does not address the student's preferences and interests.



How to meet the requirements and support student progress towards postsecondary goals:

- Transition assessments:
 - build off the strengths, preferences, interests and needs information in the students' most recent evaluation and HSBP as a foundation and to support alignment.
 - reflects students' voice and aspirations by being specific and strengths-based, rather than deficit-focused or too broad.
- Teams use multiple sources (student interviews, work-based experiences, and career interest inventories) to develop a holistic picture of the student's strengths, preferences, interests, and needs.
- Findings from transition assessments are explicitly linked to measurable postsecondary goals, annual goals, course of study, and transition services.
- It is best practice to begin discussing, planning, and working towards transition in middle school or earlier.
 - OSPI has [Career Guidance Washington Lessons](#) which are a guidance and life planning curriculum for students in Grades 6–12 that can be used, differentiated and adapted to support early student driven transition planning.

2. Postsecondary Goal for Education/Training

Question 2: Enter the postsecondary goal that addresses education/training (required for all students).

Question 2a: Is the postsecondary education/training goal measurable?

- Postsecondary goals must occur AFTER the student leaves the public school system. They must be specific and measurable. They are considered "measurable" if they can be clearly identified as "met" or "not met" (i.e., they are not required to contain a baseline, target, and unit of measure like an annual IEP goal).
- If the "postsecondary goal" section of the IEP does not identify a measurable postsecondary goal for education/training, check other sections of the IEP (such as the transition assessment or transition services section) to see if the postsecondary education/training goal is identified.

Common reasons for a "**no**" response in 2a include:

- The IEP does not contain a specific goal for education/training.
- The goal can be completed prior to the student leaving high school, so it is not a POST-secondary goal. Examples: "student will participate in the LEA's 18–22 transition program", "student will research community college entrance requirements", or "student will visit the local college campus".

Compliant Examples:

- Will engage in on-the-job training.
- Is planning to attend community college or university.
- Will join a literacy group to increase skills and obtain feedback on writing. (*for an employment goal of author*)
- Will continue training in volunteer experiences, including (a) Practice following a work checklist (b) Conducting self-evaluations after completion of tasks.



Non-Compliant Examples:

- Will participate in the LEA's 18-22 program/skills center. (*not postsecondary*)
- Not currently interested in attending college and/or trade school. The school team will help explore postsecondary options. (*not specific and not postsecondary*)
- Will attend trade school, on-the-job training, two-year college, or a four-year university. (*not specific*)



How to meet the requirements and support student progress towards postsecondary goals:

- The education/training goal:
 - aligns with the transition assessment and employment goal.
 - captures the student's realistic preparation needs for their identified postsecondary goals.
 - is developed in alignment with the education goal in the students' HSBP.
 - is supported by an aligned course of study (required in the IEP) which details courses and activities that the student will do while in high school to prepare for their postsecondary goals. (e.g., enrollment in math and science classes, and hospital volunteer hours for a student planning on going to nursing school).
- The education and training goal serves as an anchor for the transition services and annual IEP goals to prepare the student for their next steps.
 - Example: If a student's education/training goal is to "enroll in a welding certification program." The transition service may include "participate in a CTE welding program and receive individualized

support in technical vocabulary" with an annual goal of "improving technical reading comprehension on welding manuals."

3. Postsecondary Goal for Employment

Question 3: Enter the postsecondary goal that addresses employment (required for all students).

Question 3a: Is the postsecondary employment goal measurable?

- Postsecondary goals must occur AFTER the student leaves the public school system. They must be specific and measurable. They are considered "measurable" if they can be clearly identified as "met" or "not met" (i.e., they are not required to contain a baseline, target, and unit of measure like an annual IEP goal).
- If the "postsecondary goal" section of the IEP does not identify a measurable postsecondary goal for employment, check other sections of the IEP (such as the transition assessment or transition services section) to see if the postsecondary employment goal is identified.

Common reasons for a "**no**" response in 3a may include:

- The IEP does not contain a postsecondary goal for employment.
- The IEP does not contain a specific goal for employment. Examples: "Will be competitively employed in a job field of his choice" AND the employment focus was not found clearly outlined in other sections of the IEP.
- The goal can be completed prior to the student leaving high school, so it is not a POST-secondary goal. Examples: "student will research the requirements of jobs in the field of computer science" or "student will have a job shadow experience in the area of automotive."

✓ Compliant Examples:

- Would like to be employed in a field that has to do with aviation, possibly military and in something related to building and/or design.
- Demonstrate knowledge of job qualifications, job requirements, educational background, training, and degrees for a career in Aesthetician work. (*while the focus is not postsecondary- a clear postsecondary employment goal is present*)

⊘ Non-Compliant Examples:

- Will have full-time paid employment in an area that aligns with interest and skills. (*not specific*)
- Will have supported employment in the community up to maximum stamina of 20 hours/week. (*not specific*)



How to meet the requirements and support student progress towards postsecondary goals:

- The IEP course of study and transition services are linked to developing skills for that employment goal.
- Teams incorporate opportunities for authentic career exploration (job shadows, internships, community-based work experiences) so goals are grounded in real-world exposure.

4. Postsecondary Goal for Independent Living Skills

Question 4: Did the IEP team determine that the student needed a postsecondary goal for independent living skills?

Question 4a: Enter the postsecondary goal that addresses independent living skills:

Question 4b: Is the postsecondary independent living skills goal measurable?

- A postsecondary goal for independent living skills (ILS) is typically needed if the student has needs in, and receives special education services for the areas of adaptive, self-help, and/or independent living.
- The ILS goal must be for a skill(s) that will enable the student to live as independently as possible – it must not be a goal for a placement (e.g., “the student will live at home”).
- All postsecondary goals must occur **AFTER** the student leaves the public school system. They must be specific and be measurable.
- If the “postsecondary goal” section of the IEP indicates an independent living skills goal is needed but does not include a measurable postsecondary goal for independent living skills, check other sections of the IEP (such as the transition assessment or transition services section) to see if the independent living skills are identified.

Common reasons for a “**no**” response in 4a include:

- The ILS goal is for a placement rather than a skill (such as “the student will live at home”).
- The IEP does not contain a specific goal for independent living. Example: “the student will have the skills they need to live independently” AND those skills were not found clearly outlined in other sections of the IEP.
- The IEP identifies student needs and services in the area of independent living skills but does not contain a postsecondary goal for ILS and does not identify why the team determined an ILS goal was not needed.

✓ Compliant Examples:

- Will independently ride the bus to work.
- Will have the skills to live independently (*and the specific skills are described either within the goal, or within another section of the Transition Plan like the Transition Service or Course of Study section*).
- Will communicate and self-advocate in home, community, and employment settings.

⊘ Non-Compliant Examples:

- Will have the skills to live independently (*and specific skills are not described*). (*not specific*)
- Will live at home with their family. (*a placement rather than a skill*)
- Will get an apartment with a roommate. (*a placement rather than a skill*)



How to meet the requirements and support student progress towards postsecondary goals:

- Independent living skills goals:
 - are written with specificity, focusing on the development of functional independent living skills (e.g., money management, transportation, personal health management, time management or community navigation).
 - integrate student, family and community input to ensure the skills are practical and relevant for the student’s intended postsecondary environment.
- Goals are directly connected to services and activities that build independence during high school.

5. Transition Services

Question 5: Does the IEP contain transition services that focus on improving academic and functional achievement of the student to reasonably enable the student to meet the identified postsecondary goals?

- If no, why was it noncompliant?

- Transition services must be individualized and explicitly connected to the student's measurable postsecondary goals
- Transition services include a variety of activities, including instruction (both general education and specially designed instruction (SDI), related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, acquisition of daily living skills, and provision of a functional vocational evaluation.

A possible reason for a "**no**" response* includes:

- The student has turned 16 as of the date of the IEP, but the IEP team has not yet addressed secondary transition in the IEP (i.e., the IEP does not contain any transition components).

NOTE: A "no**" response is uncommon for this area, since the definition of transition services is very broad and includes: instruction (both general education and specially designed instruction (SDI)), related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, acquisition of daily living skills, and provision of a functional vocational evaluation.*



How to meet the requirements and support student progress towards postsecondary goals:

- Services span multiple domains (instruction, community experiences, employment preparation, daily living, related services), not just coursework, to reflect a whole-person approach.
- Each service should clearly show how it supports the student in moving toward postsecondary goals. For example:
 - Instruction: "Self-advocacy skills instruction to support requesting accommodations in college."
 - Community Experience: "Supported volunteer work at the local library to practice workplace behaviors."
- Districts document services even when provided in general education or by outside agencies (with consent), to ensure clarity and accountability.
- Postsecondary readiness and exploration activities that are part of a student's HSBP, and any IEP-determined differentiation needed for those activities are also documented.

6. Course of Study (COS)

Question 6: Does the IEP contain a course(s) of study that will reasonably enable the student to meet the identified postsecondary goals?

- If yes, please enter (copy and paste) the course of study.
- If no, why was it noncompliant?

- A course of study can include, but is not limited to, vocational education opportunities, participation in specific classes, work-based learning, community experiences, etc.
- The course of study must reflect **future** coursework and instruction, rather than past courses already taken.

Common reasons for a “**no**” response include:

- The course of study says the student will take the courses required for graduation - which is what ALL high school students are doing and is not specific to the student and their postsecondary goals.
- The IEP does not contain a course of study, or says “see attached”, but there is nothing attached.

Compliant Examples:

- A description of the specific Career and Technical Education (CTE) Sequence the student will follow for the graduation pathway.
- A list of individualized courses for graduation and postsecondary preparation (for example replacing language courses, the flexible third credit of math, career exploration, or work-based learning options).
- A description of the specially designed instruction and community and vocational experiences the student will receive to support their postsecondary goals.

Non-Compliant Examples:

- Is on track for graduation (or lists only the graduation requirements for all students). (*not specific*)
- Plan is to be determined. (*not specific*)

How to meet the requirements and support student progress towards postsecondary goals:

- The course of study:
 - may include just the year in which the IEP is in effect or may be for multiple years. It may be in the form of a list or a narrative describing the key courses and activities.
 - should reference and build off of the student’s HSBP.
- Student’s planned coursework moves beyond course planning and includes early career exploration as well as planned activities that support a student’s education, independent living skills and employment goals.

7. Annual IEP Goals

Question 7: Does the IEP contain annual IEP goals that support the student's transition services needs?

- If no, why was it noncompliant

- Examples of IEP goals that support transition include: academic goals (reading, writing, math, functional academics), goals for writing resumes or letters of application, behavioral goals addressing on-the-job behaviors, adaptive goals in accessing community services (such as public transportation), etc.

A possible reason for a "**no**" response may include:

- The student has turned 16 as of the date of the IEP, but the IEP team has not yet addressed secondary transition in the IEP (i.e., the IEP does not contain any transition components), therefore making it difficult to identify whether the IEP goals would support the transition services or postsecondary goals.

NOTE: A "no**" response is uncommon for this area, since most IEP goals are related to enabling the student to make progress in the skills needed after high school.*



How to meet the requirements and support student progress towards postsecondary goals:

- Annual IEP goals should be directly linked to the student's measurable postsecondary goals, ensuring coherence across the IEP.
- IEP teams review transition assessment data to identify skills the student must build for success in employment, education/training, or independent living — these form the basis for annual goals.

8. Student Invitation

Question 8: Is there evidence that the student was invited to participate in the IEP meeting?

- If no, why was it noncompliant?

- Evidence that the student was invited to the IEP meeting could include any one of the following:
 - Student signed the IEP.
 - IEP meeting invitation was addressed to the student.
 - IEP meeting invitation listed the student as an invited participant (in the list of those attending).
 - The transition section of the IEP states (e.g., narrative or checkbox) that the student was invited or participated in the IEP meeting.

This area would only be marked with a "**no**" response if ALL the following were true:

- No student signature on the IEP,
- Student name not identified on the IEP invitation form, AND
- IEP transition section does not state that the student was invited/participated.

*NOTE: This is not a common area for a "**no**" response.*



How to meet the requirements and support student progress towards postsecondary goals:

- A student's ability to independently utilize and request the accommodations, modifications and supports outlined in the IEP is an important skill in adult life and is needed in postsecondary education and training settings where accommodations are student-directed. IEP teams support students' skill development by working in collaboration with other school staff to:
 - Provide instruction, direct services and visual supports that help students understand the accommodations, modifications, and supports included in their IEP.
 - Foster independence by teaching and encouraging students to advocate for, and independently use, their accommodations, modifications and supports across settings.
 - Establish feedback structures that allow students to reflect on and report the usefulness of their accommodations, modifications and supports so that adjustments can be made as needed in the iterative IEP process.
- Student prepares and leads a portion of their IEP meeting focused on reviewing transition goals and supports. Each year students grow their skills to lead and contribute meaningfully in the IEP process.

9. Agency Invitation

Question 9: Will other agencies be providing or paying for IEP transition services during the current IEP?

Question 9a: Did the parent or adult student provide consent to invite a representative of the transition agency(ies) to the IEP meeting?

Question 9b: Is there evidence that a representative of the agency(ies) were invited to participate in the IEP meeting?

Question 9:

- This question is specifically related to IEP transition services that may be provided or paid for by an outside agency (i.e., an agency other than the school district).
- Representatives of other agencies are required to be invited to the IEP meeting, with parent/adult student consent, if one of the IEP transition services (see question 5 above) is being provided or paid for by an outside agency.
- This question is not referring to activities such as providing information to families about the services outside agencies provide and/or how to enroll for services (sometimes referred to in IEPs as "agency linkages").

Question 9a:

- If the other agency is paying or providing for IEP transition services, the LEA must obtain parent/adult student consent and invite representatives of the other agency to the IEP meeting.
- If there is evidence that parent/adult student consent was obtained, enter "Yes" for this question.
- If parent/adult student consent was attempted, but not obtained, enter "**No**" for this question.

Question 9b:

- If consent was provided and representative(s) were invited, but did not attend the IEP meeting, enter "Yes".
- This area would only be marked "**No**" if there is no evidence that representatives of that agency were invited to participate in the IEP meeting.

**NOTE: This is not a common area for non-compliance since it is limited to just those transition services in the IEP that are being provided/paid for by an entity other than the LEA and does NOT include agency "linkages" (i.e., getting the student/family connected with an outside agency).*



How to meet the requirements and support student progress towards postsecondary goals:

- The IEP team reviews a student's transition assessments, postsecondary goals, and transition services to inform the agencies invitations a student may benefit from and need.
- Agencies that may be relevant include the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Developmental Disabilities Community Services (DDCS), behavioral health providers, employment support agencies, or higher education disability support offices.
- Best practice is to prepare the student and family for agency participation, explaining the purpose of the agency and how it may support the student's postsecondary goals. The [Washington State Transition Map](#) is a helpful resource developed by the Washington State Rehabilitation Council (WSRC).
- If an invited agency representative does not attend, the IEP team documents efforts to involve them and continues to explore other ways to coordinate services.
- Agency participation should be integrated, not perfunctory: for example, DVR staff may share eligibility information or co-develop employment-related services with the IEP team.

Resources

General IEP Transition Plan Guidance

- [Transition Supports and Services Summary for Students, Families & Caregivers](#)
- [April 2023: Tips from the Special Education Division: Secondary Transition Services and Supports](#)

Aligning Individualized Education Programs (IEP) Transition Plans and High School and Beyond Plans (HSBP)

- [Guidelines for Aligning HSBPs and IEP Transition Plans](#)
 - Case Study of a 10th grader using a CTE Course Sequence: [Document](#) | [Webinar Recording](#) | [Slides](#)
 - Case Study of an Adult Student using the WA-AIM: [Document](#) | [Webinar Recording](#) | [Slides](#)
 - 1/27 WSAC Webinar: [Supporting Students' Transition: Aligning HSBP's and IEP Transition Plans](#)

Consent To Share Student Information with State Transition Agencies

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has created a consent form to help seamlessly connect students to support services they may be eligible for as they move through school to post-school life. The IEP team is required to present the parent/guardian with the consent, but providing consent is optional.

- [Consent to Share Student Information with State Transition Agencies Form](#)
 - [Consent Form One Pager for Students and Families](#)
 - [Consent Form One Pager for Schools](#)
- The [Washington State Transition Map](#) is a helpful resource developed by the Washington State Rehabilitation Council (WSRC).

Career Exploration Resources

- OSPI has [Career Guidance Washington Lessons](#) which are a guidance and life planning curriculum for students in Grades 6–12 than can be used, differentiated and adapted to support early student driven transition planning.

Center for Change in Transition Services (CCTS) Guidance

- [Writing Effective Transition Plan](#) self-paced modules
- [Student Lead IEPs self-paced](#) modules
- The [T-folio](#) is an excellent transition portfolio tool which is aligned to the IEP transition planning and DVR pre-ETS services.

