Special Education Leaders' Meeting
May 1, 2020
Supporting Early Childhood Transition

In light of Secretary DeVos' report to Congress, DESE and DPH developed joint suggestions for evaluation, eligibility and services

EI providers and school districts should continue to collaborate to:

- support children and families during EC transitions
- serve the Commonwealth's youngest students
- share referral and assessment information, as appropriate
- mitigate potential gaps in services

(These recommendations are independent of any potential waiver)
Supporting Early Childhood Transition – Evaluations and Eligibility

• Evaluation options
  o Accept existing EI assessments
  o Use existing assessments (if you have them)
  o Conduct virtual assessments if possible; wait for schools to re-open to finish all other assessments
  o Interview families and others

• Eligibility
  o Determine eligibility for children when you can
  o For some children, face-to-face assessments will be necessary to determine eligibility
Supporting Early Childhood Transition - Providing Services

After eligibility is determined, there are options in how to provide services. IEP teams can decide to:

1. Continue the IFSP
   - Districts can contract with EI providers to provide services and to support EC transition

2. Write an IEP
   - Your staff can provide services or
   - School district and EI staff can collaboratively provide services to support EC transition

3. Write a partial IEP and conduct an extended evaluation
Supporting Early Childhood Transition - Resources

Additional information and tools to support EC transitions and remote assessment

- DESE's Resources for Supporting Students with Disabilities
  - [http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/sped.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/sped.html)

- Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA)
  - [https://ectacenter.org/](https://ectacenter.org/)
Special Education Resource Guide
Secondary Transition At Home

- Take advantage of this time to engage with students and parents, focusing on:
  - Planning for the future.
  - Building essential adult skills.
Plan for the Future

- Encourage family conversations that arise naturally during chores, meals, walks, etc., as well as at scheduled times.
**Charting the LifeCourse** resources and tools can be flexibly adapted for families to use at home, guided by teachers.

- LifeCourse Principles
- LifeCourse Learning Materials
- LifeCourse Planning Tools

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) LifeCourse tools and resources, including Dr. Laurel Peltier’s presentation on using LifeCourse in transition planning:

https://3.basecamp.com/3267752/join/n1kqRnmj2nYj
Self-Determination Skills (e.g., decision-making, self-advocacy)

- Students can learn how to set a goal, make a plan, carry out the plan, and evaluate how the plan went (Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction).
  - Set the schedule for the day and week.
  - Coordinate the Remote Learning Plan in partnership with teacher and parent.
  - Increase level of responsibility for jobs at home.
Independent Living Skills

• **Technology:**
  o Practice phone skills;
  o Learn to search the web safely;
  o Learn how to create a website and/or virtual portfolio about themselves that they can use when applying for jobs and college.

• **Around the house, learn how to:**
  o Do own laundry;
  o Clean bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, etc. with the right tools;
  o Plan healthy meals and cook for one or several people;
  o Care for small children;
  o Sort mail and packages;
  o Stock kitchen with groceries;
  o Organize closets and drawers.

• **Healthcare:**
  o Learn about COVID and how to stay healthy;
  o Learn about own health records, medication, doctor/dentist contacts and procedures;
  o Schedule/cancel appointments.

• **Finances:**
  o Learn how to choose and budget for groceries and other expenses;
  o Research costs for internet, phone service, utilities, rent;
  o Learn about federal and state disability benefits.

• **Fitness:**
  o Plan and implement an exercise routine.

• **Recreation:**
  o Learn a new hobby from friends/family online or through a website;
  o Start an online club.
Explore a Future Career

- Students can assess their own interests and learn about careers:
  - O*NET Online: U.S. Dept. of Labor site with career assessment and exploration resources.
  - Explore Work: career assessment and exploration site for teens with disabilities.
  - Career One-Stop: career, training and job search resources.
  - DESE’s Career Profile Project: numerous interviews in a variety of careers, as well as a template students can use to interview friends/relatives/neighbors in the workforce.
  - Jobs Made Real by Teens for Teens: numerous videos with real-life jobs.
  - DreamWakers: national nonprofit virtually connecting students to career role models.

- Develop a college/career plan using MyCAP:
Secondary Transition Resources Updated Weekly

NTACT
National Technical Assistance Center on Transition

- https://transitionta.org/covid19
• Essential so that agencies (DDS, MRC, DMH, MCB, DCF, MCDHH) can request the right amount of funding from the legislature to serve students with disabilities who will turn 22 and are eligible for agency services.

• Completed by the school 2 years before anticipated date of exit – but better late than never.

• A 688 referral is not the same as an application for adult agency eligibility. No agency services result from the 688 referral. Families submit a separate application for agency eligibility, so that the student can be considered for adult services.
Minimum Requirements for 688 Referrals During Pandemic

• Submit via Virtual Gateway with 688 referral:
  o Most recent IEP.
  o Most recent 3-year evaluation.

• Parent consent during the COVID-19 crisis can be:
  o Wet signature or e-signature.
  o Email consent.
  o Verbal consent documented in school or agency staff notes.

Questions about 688 filing or referral? Kathy Stern, Bureau of Transition Planning, 857-352-1741 or kathleen.stern@mass.gov.
Turning 22—Extensions?

- Known area of concern
- DESE engaged in problem solving with other adult serving agencies
- Individual situations being addressed on case by case basis
New state resources: Office of the Child Advocate and UMass Medical Public Information Campaign

- Inform MA families of resources available to them and
- Encourage struggling families to reach out for support.
New state resources: Office of the Child Advocate and UMass Medical Public Information Campaign

• [https://www.mass.gov/lists/we-all-need-help-sometimes](https://www.mass.gov/lists/we-all-need-help-sometimes)

• Currently in English and Spanish.
• Additional languages being translated.

• To be notified when new languages are available or if you have questions contact [Melissa.Threadgill@mass.gov](mailto:Melissa.Threadgill@mass.gov)