

TRANSITION PLANNING

Transitions

Transitions occur at various stages and levels for students. Some transitions occur on a regular basis between activities and settings within the routines of the school day. Significant transitions, however, such as entry to school, elementary to secondary and from secondary to postsecondary destination are complex and require collaboration among school, parents and community partners.

Durham Catholic District School Board is committed to assisting students with the preparation for, and the adjustment to change, as they adapt to a variety of settings in an effort to reduce or avoid some of the anxiety that they may experience.

Program Policy Memorandum 156: Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Needs provides direction to school boards regarding the development of student transition plans for all students with special education needs in Kindergarten to Grade 12. A transition plan as identified in PPM 156 must be in place to support the student in those transitions which may include: entry to school; transition between grades; moving from school to school; from elementary to secondary school; as well as transition from secondary school to next appropriate pathways as identified in Regulation 181/98.

PPM 140: Incorporating Methods of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) into Programs for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) provides specific transition planning requirements for students with autism spectrum disorders, in addition to the requirements set out in PPM 156.

Entry Planning

The goal of planning for entry to school is to help children adjust to the school setting and routines and develop a positive attitude towards learning. A good start to school improves a child's chances of success from school entry to graduation. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are encouraged to participate in the early registration process. Early registration provides the principal and school team with the opportunity to meet the parent(s)/guardian(s) and child and determine if there are special needs or supports that are required at the outset, setting the stage for success. For children with special needs, entry to school is complex and requires careful planning and coordination. Successful entry-to-school planning involves sharing information and coordinating resources among a team of support, including:

- o Parent(s)/Guardian(s)
- o Providers of preschool programs and services
- o School board staff

An Entry Planning Meeting facilitates Early Identification planning. The Program Support Teacher from the community school in which the student is registered, will contact the Family of Schools Student Services Coordinator to arrange the meeting, ensuring that all relevant personnel from the School Board, School and Community Agencies are invited to attend.

During the Entry Planning Meeting, participants will:

- Share copies of relevant assessment results and/or reports
- Share the child's pre-school and/or present school file
- Identify the strengths and needs of the child
- Develop a written plan for preparing the child to make a seamless transition to school

Transition from Elementary to Secondary

The transition from elementary school to secondary school is a time of celebration and discernment. New challenges and opportunities await students. Durham Catholic District School Board recognizes that students enter grade nine with different strengths, interests and goals. Students are supported in their transition to secondary school through the required development of an Individual Pathways Plan (IPP) under the education and career/life planning program outlined in *Creating Pathways to Success: An Education and Career/Life Planning Program for Ontario Schools – Policy and Program Requirements, Kindergarten to Grade 12 (2013)*.

In preparation for this transition, Secondary Program Support Teachers, Intermediate Guidance Teachers, and/or Secondary Guidance Counsellors meet with the elementary school team which may include parent(s)/guardian(s), student, classroom teacher, Program Support Teacher, Principal and/or Vice-Principal to discuss the future goals, strengths and needs of the students with complex needs. This planning meeting is crucial to ensure that the course selection, IEP curriculum related goals, learning expectations, supports and accommodations are consistent with the actions documented in the transition plan.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are encouraged to participate in the Grade 9 information sessions hosted by the secondary schools and to engage in discussion with Program Support Teachers, Intermediate Guidance Teachers, Guidance Counsellors, Student Success Teachers, subject-specific teachers, Principals and Vice-Principals to ensure their child's transition is smooth.

School Life to Adulthood

Transition planning is about looking ahead to the future and preparing for adulthood. Consideration must be given to such things as living arrangements, community programs, employment opportunities, further education opportunities, health care, recreation and social activities. Early planning is crucial in order to build the most effective transition planning process. Transition planning is a partnership involving student, parent(s)/guardian(s), other family members, teachers, community and adult service providers, employers and any other individuals with a vested interest in your child. A student has the option of attending school until June of the calendar year that the student turns 21.

As part of the Individual Education Plan, a plan for the student's transition from secondary school to a postsecondary setting must be developed with input from the student, parent(s)/guardian(s), the principal, school staff, community agencies, and postsecondary institutions, as appropriate. The plan should reflect the student's needs

and goals for their future consistent with the IEP Standards. The transition plan must include the following elements:

- specific goals for the student's transition to postsecondary activities;
- the actions required, now and in the future, to achieve the stated goals;
- the person or agency (the student, school team members, parent(s)/guardian(s), educators, providers of specialized support and services, community agencies, etc) responsible for or involved in completing or providing assistance in the completion of each of the identified actions;
- timelines for the implementation of each of the identified actions.

Integrated Transition Planning for Young People with Developmental Disabilities is available to all young people (14 years of age or older) who meet the definition of having a developmental disability. The intent of integrated transition planning is for all who support the young person with a developmental disability to work collaboratively in order to facilitate a smooth transition from child-centered services to adult services and from secondary to post-secondary pathways.