



Office for People With Developmental Disabilities

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

WILLOW BAER
Acting Commissioner

Dear Parent/Guardian:

High school is an exciting time for students as they begin to plan for the future. As the parent of a high school age student, you play a very important role in helping your child prepare for the future.

Transition planning is the process schools use to help students with disabilities and their families plan for their future after high school. School services are available to your child until they graduate with a Regents or local diploma or their access to a free appropriate public education ends. We encourage you and your child to make full use of these services.

You and your child have the chance to discuss transition planning at all Committee on Special Education (CSE) meetings. This discussion may include plans for education and training after high school to prepare for a job or career; adult continuing education or other education programs; being active in the community; getting and keeping a job; independent living; and/or other adult services. Your child's transition plan should be in effect by age 15 (8 NYCRR 200.4(d)(2)(ix)), but it can also begin earlier. The planning process is most successful when it includes both you and your child.

If your child has a developmental disability, you may want to learn about the services offered by the New York State Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). OPWDD provides many services, including supports at home, supports in the community, and employment training to help a student with a developmental disability transition successfully from school to adult life. Students and their families must apply to receive these supports and may also need to apply for Medicaid if it is required by the services they want.

To learn more about OPWDD eligibility and services, you and your child can view the OPWDD Front Door Videos at <https://opwdd.ny.gov/get-started>. For more information and to get a copy of the *Access to Services* resource booklet for individuals and families, go to <http://www.opwdd.ny.gov/get-started>. Students who already have OPWDD eligibility and are connected to a Care Coordinated Coordination Organization (CCO) should contact their Care Manager to help them request adult services.

If you think your child's future might include supports and services provided by OPWDD, it is very important for you to contact us as early as possible. If you would like the school district to invite an OPWDD representative to participate in transition planning for your child, you must sign a consent to disclose educational and health records and ask your school to invite the OPWDD representative. The consent to disclose educational records is required by federal law and New York State regulations.

We look forward to working with you and your family on transition planning for appropriate services and a successful future for your child. If you have any questions about OPWDD, please contact your local Regional Field Office (RFO). You can find RFO contact information by calling our Information Line at **866-946-9733** or emailing us at info@opwdd.ny.gov.

Sincerely,

Willow Baer
Acting Commissioner