Transitioning: Youth with Disabilities Toward the Horizon

"A ship in the harbor is safe...but that isn't what a ship is made for."

Grace Murray Hopper

This manual is dedicated to the students with disabilities who are ready to take the leap to the post-secondary educational setting, but may have some inhibitions. Our mission is to empower you with knowledge and bring forth some issues which can ultimately help you set your expectations and goals. This manual serves as a guide for self-evaluation and determining the skills that will help you with independent living.

A second mission is to provide a basis for determining your Individual Education Plan, which will enable you to identify different issues you might face. This manual will help you to understand your disability should not be a barrier for successful transition from high school to post-secondary education. All you need is correct information and accommodations.

Resource websites in this manual are current as of 2020; laws and regulations may change, so when applying for specific programs, make sure the information you are using is current by going on to the program's website.

At the end of this manual, there are two pages that can be used to take notes on any of the information included as you make decisions for your future.

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Disclaimer: All information in this manual is for educational reference. The information presented is general to students with all types of disabilities. Students with disabilities will need to identify relevant information related to their disability.

ACRONYMS OF TRANSITION

AAPD……..... American Association of People with Disabilities

ACT…….. American College Test (comprehensive Test)

ADA …… Americans with Disabilities Act

ADD……..Attention Deficit Disorder

ADHD…….. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

ADL…….. Activities of Daily Living

AFDC……Aid for Dependent Children

AHEAD……..... Association on Higher Education and Disability

ASVAB……Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery

AT…….Assistive Technology

BST…….....Basic Skills Test

CAP……...Client Assistance Project

CFP……..... Consumer Financial Participation

CIL……Center for Independent Living

DAC……..Developmental Achievement Center

DEED……Department of Employment and Economic Development

DFA…….. Dimensional Fund Advisor

DHS…….. Department of Human Services

DSS……...Disability Support Services

DVR……..Department of Vocational Rehabilitation

FAFSA……..Free Application for Federal Student Aid

FAPE…….Free and Appropriate Education

FERPA……..Family Education Rights and Privacy Act

FFEL…….Federal Family Education Loan

GA…….General Assistance

GAMC……..... General Assistance Medical Care

GED…….....General Equivalency Diploma

HUD…….....Department of Housing and Urban Development

IDEA…….Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

IEP…… Individual Education Plan

IIIP…… Individual Interagency Intervention Plan

JTPA……. Job Training Partnership Act

LD……Learning Disability

MA……Medical Assistance

MCA……. Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment

MNSCU…….Minnesota State College and Universities

MDN……Minnesota Department of Health

OJT……On-the-Job Training

PAS……Personal Assistant Services

PCA…….. Personal Care Assistance

PIN……Personal Identification Number

PLAN……Pre-ACT Test

PSAT…….....Preliminary SAT

SAT…….. Scholastic Aptitude Test

SILS…….. Semi-Independent Living Services

SSA……... Social Security Administration

SS……..Social Security

SSDI……..Social Security Disability Income

SSI…….Supplemental Security Income

SWCIL…….....Southwestern Center for Independent Living

TANF……Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

UDL…….....Universal Design for Learning

VA……Veterans Affairs

VRS……..Vocational Rehabilitation Services

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INTRODUCTION TO TRANSITION

Transition is a part of development in which a person evolves from one stage of life to another. In an educational system, the most important transition takes place as a person enters a new phase of life, from high school and beyond. Transition is breaking the security blanket offered by the parents and embarking on an adventure full of risk and opportunities. It's a challenge that can be achieved by self-determination and self-advocacy; along with support from family and friends.

The process of transition poses several challenges. The most important ones happen when you don't know what to expect, how and where to approach it, and how to get the right information. A broader definition of transition for disabled students can be defined as a "formal process of cooperative planning that will assist students with disability to move from school into the adult world." It is difficult for every student with a disability to go through the challenges offered by the transition process all by themselves. They will certainly need active support from family, friends, and the community to face these new challenges (Stores, 2007).[1]

[1] Stores, Dan. Transition Resource Guide. SW/SC Service Cooperatives. June 2006.

TOP TEN TIPS FOR TRANSITION

Good planning starts from a good "to do" list created over a periodic timeline. In the transition process, these tips are the basic steps to internalize.

1. One Should Be Ready
Mentally preparing oneself about the upcoming transition challenges is the best way to cope with the demands it will pose. You can make a difference only with your will, so make yourself willing to accept the challenges and be ready.

2. One Should Be Proactive
At certain times the kind of help that you need might not be readily available; therefore it's in your best interest to voice your needs. Being actively involved in your IEP meetings is important because it gives you the opportunity to openly discuss your needs and the nature of your disability with the IEP team.

3. One Should Be Optimistic
Our perception is our reality. Generally, being positive helps you overcome stress that you might face. Be positive on what you think and start acting on it.

4. Know Yourself and Advocate for Yourself
Know yourself first. Once you recognize your capabilities and the power inside you, you can more easily decide on your future and what to look for.

5. Look Forward to being Independent in your Community
Transition professionals and IEP teams can help you seek opportunities within the community to be independent. These opportunities might be volunteer work, part-time jobs, recreational activities or even internships.

6. One Should Seek Out Helpful Resources
Discover which institutions meet your short-term and long-term plans. Post-secondary career/counseling services, high school guidance counselors, and psychologists can help students choose a better career goal. They can help you find jobs that you are interested in, and do job placements if necessary. Various clubs and organizations on campus may also be helpful for meeting friends, along with developing other various life skills.

7. Build Self-Determination and Self Motivating Skills
As you get to know yourself and have received information and help from transition experts, you will be able to plan your future accordingly. Self-motivation is the best way to make yourself do the things you want. "Enjoy the challenge."

8. Set Goals

Transitioning is an ongoing, lifelong process and a person may be working on reaching more than one goal at a time. You must set goals that are attainable for you and make decisions that allow you to achieve them. If a particular goal can only be achieved in the long term, you must break up the goal into smaller steps to make it more attainable.

9. Have a Plan

Make a file of important documents, labeling them in appropriate sections.
Include important documents such as:

A. IEP (Individual Education Plan)
B. Transition Plan
C. Ability, achievement and testing reports
D. Medical Reports-Needs Immunization Records
E. High School Transcripts
F. Vocational Rehabilitation Correspondence Documents
G. Social Service and Medical Assistance
H. Personal Care Attendant (PCA) Providers and Correspondences of Documents
I. College and Vocational Training and Applications and Correspondence
J. Financial Aid Application and Correspondence
K. Scholarship Application and Award Notices.
L. Housing Application and Correspondences
M. Billing notice and request for payments
N. Health Insurance Requirements
    1. Covers student under parent's policy until age 26. Effective 9/2010[2]
    2. How many credits do you need to maintain to qualify under parents insurance
    3. Medical Assistance/ Medicare Eligibility
    4. Individual Policy
    5. Pre-existing conditions[3]
    6. Dependent who is disabled[2]

10. Act!

Once you have done your research, and have your decision made on what your ultimate goal is, start working towards achieving it.

According to Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) "52 percent of people who are disabled" do not consider themselves as disabled, and they have the full right to do so. Hence, this kind of attitude helps us to fight for our needs and accept the challenges provided by the transitional process.

[2] http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/health/dependent-health-coverage-state-implementation
[3] http://www.standupforhealthcare.org/learn-more/quick-facts/12-reasons-to-support-health-care

Checklist for Potential College Students

7th – 8th Grade	
	Develop an understanding of your disability, and its effect on your education.
	Identify and compensate for your educational strengths and weaknesses.
	Attend and be involved in your IEP meeting.
	Get involved in extra-curricular activities (e.g. music programs, clubs, sports, and other youth programs).
	Start developing a simple list of career interests.
9th Grade	
	Be involved in your IEP meeting, consider a student led IEP, and incorporate transition goals in your IEP.
	Learn and develop skills required for self-advocacy.
	Strengthen your understanding of your disability and be able to explain it to others.
	Develop and further identify skills for academic independence.
	Learn study skills and ways of effective time management.
	Continue involvement in extra curricular activities and seek volunteer work.
	Investigate assistive technology and services to assist in daily living (e.g. interpreter, PCA, transportation, books on tape, computer software, and auxiliary aids.)
	When you turn 15, take driver's education, obtain your learner's permit, and enroll in driver's training with needed modifications if applicable.[4]
	Start preliminary research of career options.
	Decide what classes to take in high school to keep on track to graduate.
	Develop basic financial skills (e.g. balancing a check book, writing checks, and opening a bank account).

[4] Minnesota Department of Public Safety Driver and Vehicle Services. Minnesota Department of Public Safety Driver and Vehicle Services. 14 Aug. 2007 <http://www.dps.state.mn.us/DVS/DriverLicense/DL%20Info/DL%20frame.htm>.

10th Grade	
	Remain actively involved in your IEP meeting, if possible have a student led IEP, and further incorporate transition goals.
	Strengthen self-advocacy.
	Be clear how your disability affects you.
	Strive to be academically independent.
	Maintain involvement in extra-curricular activities and volunteer work.
	Expand your assistive technology skills and other needed adaptations.
	Further develop your financial skills (e.g. using an ATM machine, know how to order checks, and using online banking).
	At the Department of Motor Vehicles and/or County Auditor, schedule a driving road test, pass it, and obtain a Driver's License **-OR-** apply for a Minnesota State ID card. Note: For a drivers' license, you must be at least 16, have completed behind the wheel, had a permit for six months with no convictions for moving or alcohol and controlled substance violations. [5]
	Take courses that prepare you for college and keep you on track for graduation.
	Keep your GRADES UP! ☺
	Take the PSAT or PLAN as well as the ASVAB with or without accommodations.
	Improve social skills and social networking.
	Begin exploring eligibility requirements and services provided by Home County/Family Human Services, the Department of Rehabilitation Services, and your local Center for Independent Living.
	Continue researching career options. Consider a careers class between now and high school graduation.
11th Grade	
	Continue to be active in your IEP meeting, if possible continue with student led IEP, and expand on incorporated transition goals.
	Check if the classes modified by your IEP meet the general requirements for high school graduation.

[5] Minnesota Department of Public Safety Driver and Vehicle Services. Minnesota Department of Public Safety Driver and Vehicle Services. 14 Aug. 2007 http://www.dps.state.mn.us/DVS/DriverLicense/DL%20Info/DL%20frame.htm

	Refine self-advocacy skills.
	Maintain and refine your academically independent skills.
	Make sure the documentation of your disability is current; update if necessary.
	Remain actively involved in extra-curricular activities and/or seek part time employment.
	Re-evaluate your assistive technology needs and locate new resources. Determine the cost for assistive technology and identify funding sources.
	Reevaluate your financial skills and expand on them (e.g. understand your financial rights, learn how saving accounts work, and understand how loans and credit cards are used).
	Meet with your guidance counselor about possible post-secondary education options that fit your interests and abilities.
	Consider taking a SAT or ACT prep course. Contact your high school guidance counselor to get further information about course sites and dates.
	If attending a four-year institution, take the SAT or ACT and arrange necessary accommodations if needed.
	Review career interests and if needed participate in interest surveys. You can also practice job shadowing or work in an interested area in your community.
	Continue taking college preparation classes which may include classes for college credit.
	Keep your grades up and stay on track towards graduation.
	Begin applying for services provided by external sources. In Home County/Family Human Services and Rehabilitation Services.
	Attend college fairs, and consider possible majors.
	Visit college campuses and meet with each college's Office of Disability Services. Note: The Office of Disability Services may have a different name.
	As you consider colleges, identify disability services provided by each college and determine how each meets your individual needs.
	Explore post-secondary housing options.
	Look into financial aid and scholarships from federal, state, local, and private sources.
	Create a folder for important documents.
	Identify people to write recommendations/references for you.
	Contact your local Dept. of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) Coordinator and invite them to your next IEP meeting.
	You are accountable for your behavior and activities. There are consequences for illegal activity. If you are considered an adult, misdemeanors may be on your record for the rest of your life.

12th Grade Fall Semester	
	Review checklist from 7th-8th grade to 11th grade and focus on areas of need.
	Attend your final IEP meeting, review your IEP with the IEP team, and make sure your testing, accommodations, documentation, and transition goals are all up to date.
	Check if the classes modified by your IEP meet the general requirements for high school graduation.
	Continue involvement in extra-curricular activities and/or part-time employment.
	If necessary, re-take the SAT or ACT.
	Early in the fall apply to post-secondary institutions of your preference including housing applications, applications for disability services, and institution-specific scholarships.
	Enjoy your senior year; it only happens once. ☺
	Continue taking college prep classes and keep on track for graduation.
	Update your folder for important documents and create a folder for essential post-secondary documents.
	Select and accept admission from your school of choice.
	Inform housing staff if you have special room needs if applicable.
	Fill out the FAFSA form and then apply for financial aid at your post-secondary institution of choice.
	If male, register for Selective Service. Note: Must be done before your 18th birthday.
Spring Semester	
	Schedule another campus visit at your school of choice. Meet with all appropriate personnel. At this time, it is especially important to register with the disability services office.
	Continue to develop your self-advocacy skills as well as your academically independent skills.
	Remain in college prep classes and keep on track for graduation.
	Keep your grades up. Try to avoid senioritis ☺.
	Develop a financial aid plan and respond to your financial award letter. Important: If you have not received an award letter, contact your school of choice.
	Revisit the Offices of Disability Services on your campus and determine if all disability eligibility requirements have been met.

	Make sure all external services and supports are in place (e.g. Medicaid, Medicare, Medical Assistance (MA), and DRS).
	If needed, set up Personal Care Assistants if not already done.
	Apply for social security related programs.
	Confirm your financial aid award and find out when and how funds are distributed.
	Learn skills on how to be interviewed and consider doing a mock interview.
Summer	
	Celebrate your graduation!
	Attend freshman orientation.
	If applicable, introduce yourself to your roommate via email or phone.
	Learn your legal responsibilities and rights at the age of majority (age of 18).
	Understand the billing and payment practices at your institution every semester to be enrolled without any problems.
	Thank all the individuals who have helped you to get to this point in your life.

6 7 8

[6] Catch the Wave: A Guide to Post-Secondary Education for Students with Disabilities. South Dakota Transition Services Liaison Project

[7] Transition Resource Guide: Transition Services in Southwest Minnesota for Students with Disabilities. Developed by Dan Stores SW/WC Services Cooperative. Marshall, MN. November 2006

[8] Planning Guide for Minnesota Students earning Post-Secondary Education Programs. Created by MNSCU and the Minnesota Department of Education. October 17, 2006

MINNESOTA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENT

The purpose for setting the high school graduating requirement is to determine how well prepared high school graduates are for transitioning into post-secondary expectations. Graduation requirements are criteria set by states that students must meet in order to obtain diplomas or certificates of completion. In most states, there are multiple requirements for graduation; these may include attendance, minimum grade-point average, minimum credits completed, and passing scores on high-stakes tests or other benchmark exams.

Legislation passed in 2006 has changed the graduation requirement for high school students in Minnesota. This requirement covers subject areas for students graduating in the years 2007 – 2015. [9]

Minnesota State Graduation Requirements for high school students totals to 21.5 course credits. These course credits are equivalent to students successfully completing an academic year of study, or a student mastering the applicable subject matter as determined by the local school district. Among the 21.5 credits there are seven elective credits. Students are required to pass the MCA-IIs in reading, math, and writing to graduate from high school.

The following table will be helpful for you to look through the specific requirements according to the subjects.

Minnesota State Graduation Requirements (No updated info found)[10] 21.5 course credits Total includes 7 elective credits. Students must also meet local requirements. Graduation credit requirements must be fully in place for the class of 2007-08 unless otherwise noted.
Language Arts* **4 credits** -and- **Pass** Written Composition Grade 9 - and - **Pass** MCA-II Reading Grade 10 **Transition**: Students in Grades 9-12 in 2005-06 must pass BST Reading and BST/MCA in Written Composition Grade 10
Mathematics* **3 credits**, encompassing the algebra, geometry, and statistics and probability content specified in the grades 9-11 standards -and- **Pass** MCA-II Mathematics Grade 11

[9] For more information, contact the Minnesota Department of Education.

[10] **A course credit** is equivalent to a student successfully completing an academic year of study, or a student mastering the applicable subject matter as determined by the local school district.

Transition: Students in Grades 9-12 in 2005-06 must pass BST Mathematics. Students in the class of 2015 must complete an Algebra I credit by the end of 8th Grade, and must also complete an Algebra II credit or its equivalent, in addition to the requirements above.
Arts*   **1 credit**
Science*   **3 credits**, including one in biology and two credits on student's choice.   Note: An agriculture science course may fulfill a general science credit requirement.   Students in the class of 2015 must earn a biology credit and a chemistry or physics credit as part of the three-credit requirement.
Social Studies*   **3.5 credits**, encompassing US history, geography, world history, economics, and government/citizen   -or-   **3.5 credits**, encompassing US history, geography, world history, government/citizen, and a .5 credit in economics (taught in social studies, business, or agriculture educational department
Health/Physical Education*   Local Decision
Career and Technical Education   Local Decision
World Language   Local Decision
English Language Proficiency (ELP) [11]   ELP students are to the same graduation credit requirements as all students.

[11] Federally required if districts receive Title III dollars

* Required standards are indicated by an asterisk (*).

MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY'S

SYSTEM ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

MNSCU has prerequisite criteria to get started while one is enrolled in high school.

Two- Year State College Requirements:

The two-year state/community and technical college have an open admission policy. This means:

- You can enroll if you have a high school diploma or a GED. Even without meeting these requirements, you may be admitted if you demonstrate potential for success in college on a provisional basis.
- No standardized tests are required for admission to the two-year state colleges, and your high school grades and class rank are not considered.
- After you have been admitted, you will be required to take a test for placement in the appropriate courses based on your reading, writing, and mathematics skills.
- You are more likely to do well on the placement test if you complete a "college prep" curriculum in high school, including four years of English and three years of mathematics, science and social studies. If you did not take, or if you had minimum passing scores on the Minnesota Basic Standards test, you may not be admitted to certain programs. Most likely, you will have to take developmental or remedial courses that will not count toward a degree before you can take college-level courses. [12]

Four-year state university requirements

The seven MNSCU state Universities generally will accept you if you can answer yes to at least one of these questions:

- Did you graduate in the top half of your high school class?
- Did you score 21 or higher on the ACT standardized test?
- Did you receive a combined score of 1,000 or higher on the SAT standardized test?

Admission to some of the seven state Universities may require meeting slightly different requirements. Check with the University Admission Office for details. Even if you don't meet minimum requirements, you may be considered for admission under special provisions. Apply early in 12th grade for the best chance at being admitted. Some Universities and programs do not have room for all qualified applicants.

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[12] Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. 2007. Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. 14Aug.2007<https://learn.org/articles/What_are_the_Requirements_for_Entrance_into_Two-Year_Colleges.html>

For admission to a state university, you also should have completed these courses in high school:

- Four years of English, including composition and literature,
- Three years of math, including two years of algebra: one of which is intermediate or advanced algebra, and one year of geometry,
- Three years of science, including one year each of a biological and a physical science with laboratory experience,
- Three years of social studies, including one year each of U.S. history and geography,
- Two years of a single world language, including non-English native languages and American Sign Language, and
- One year of visual and performing arts [12]

There may be something called an "automatic admit" which means you have fully met all requirements for admission, no one area is deficient. Some postsecondary schools may have admission criteria that are modified for students with documented disabilities. The admission criteria staff or the disability coordinator can provide further information on these issues. MNSCU have adapted flexibility in their admission policies, where admission can be granted in provisional basis depending upon the interaction with the admission counselors.

12 Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. 2007. Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. 14 Aug. 2007 <https://education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/grad/>

POST-SECONDARY EXPECTATIONS & MINNESOTA'S GRADUATION REQUIREMENT [13]

MN State Colleges (MnSCU)	University of Minnesota
English/Language Arts 4 years	**English/Language Arts** 4 years
Mathematics 3 years (2 years algebra, 1 year geometry)	**Mathematics** 4 years (elementary algebra, geometry, intermediate algebra, choice of calculus, pre-calculus,analysis, or integrated math 4)
Science 3 years (min. 1 year each of a biological and physical science)	**Science** 3 years (min. 1 year each of a biological and physical science, including lab experience)
Social Studies 3 years (min. 1 year each U.S. history and geography; 1 year student's choice)	**Social Studies** 3 years (min. 1 year each U.S. history and geography [to include courses that integrate geography]; 1 year student's choice)
Electives 2 years of a single language; 1 year of world cultures or fine arts	**Electives** 2 years of a single language 1 year of visual and/or performing arts

Private Post-Secondary Institutions

The requirements at private institutions may vary, depending on the specific school you choose. However, a general rule of thumb is that consideration will be given to:

- High school GPA
- ACT or SAT scores
- Class ranking
- Letters of recommendation
- Personal essay or statement

[13] <http://www.minnstate.edu/admissions/requirements.html>

Who Stays in Post-Secondary?

	Successful Students	Unsuccessful Students
Motivation	▪ Goal-Oriented ▪ Determination, Perseverance ▪ Self Discipline ▪ Willingness to work	▪ Lack of goals or career ideas ▪ Immature and negative attitude ▪ Procrastination
Preparation	▪ Academic background ▪ Knowledge of study and compensatory techniques ▪ Knowledge of learning styles ▪ Time management skills	▪ Lack of academic preparation ▪ Protected in high school ▪ Learned helplessness ▪ Lack of study and time management ▪ Disorganized
Self-Advocacy	▪ Self awareness ▪ Self –acceptance ▪ Knowledge of laws, policies and resources ▪ Assertiveness skills ▪ Problem solving skills	▪ Unrealistic expectations ▪ Denial of disability, embarrassment ▪ Lack of knowledge of legal rights ▪ Lack of self-esteem and self-confidence ▪ Lack of effective communication techniques ▪ Lack of problem solving skills

ADVISING & COURSE SELECTION

Advising and course selection for a student with a disability works pretty much like it does with any other student. You must find out what classes you need and what fits in your schedule. If you encounter a class that is necessary for the completion of your degree, make sure you take that course and get it done in order of required classes.

Identify your Advisors:

Advisors Do's	Advisors Don'ts
• Advises you on what courses to take. • May direct you to academic services and activities on campus. • Helps you prepare a timeline for graduation according to the credit hours. • May suggest certain professors. • May only be available by appointment. • May suggest possible internships.	• They do not find you; you'll have to find them. • They do not tell; they can only suggest. • They do not declare your majors; they inform you of possible options. • They do not check over individual assignments. • They do not find jobs for you.

Disclose yourself to your academic advisor:

This will help to figure out what kind of schedule works for you.

- If you are a morning person or evening?
- How does your body response in the morning? Example: Joints/body aches in early morning or later in the evenings.
- Topics re: 'x' trigger reaction, (e.g. seizure, anxiety and post traumatic stress).
- If it takes you longer to learn a subject because of your disability. Difficult topics require more time (e.g. math and foreign language)
- Need time for Activities of Daily Living (ADL's)

Advise on Course Selection/Class selection:

University Credit Hours (desired/advised)

In most universities, students are encouraged to take 12 to 18 credits each semester, depending on each student individually. The amount of credits can be affected by your expected graduation date, insurance regulations, cost of tuition, personal ability, and maintaining satisfactory progress toward graduation for financial aid purposes.

Teaching style
Get to know the instructor's methods of teaching, whether it is more verbal or theoretical, hands-on or lectures, etc.

Class format
The number of students in the class you take (small group discussion vs. large lecture hall).

Exam format
Whether it is conducted in an essay format or multiple choice/short answers.

Amount of reading
Amount of daily reading/studying required in and out of the classroom.

Differences that matter:

Monday/ Wednesday/ Friday classes are approximately 50 minutes long; Tuesday/ Thursday classes are 1 hour 15 minutes long. What differences does that make for you?

- Number of days per week of being in-class for continuity and practice (two days verses three days)
- Amount of time required to pay attention and be seated in class (50 min. vs. 1 ¼ hr)

How much time are you allowing between classes?

- Amount of time necessary to get to next class
- Ability to get organized before beginning class, to re-focus
- Possible time necessary to prepare for class (e.g. read, write lab report, review notes and complete project)
- Desired time to relax, study, eat, and take medication(s).

Note: Talk with instructor/department and/or look at a syllabus **BEFORE** enrolling in a course, if possible.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING (ACTIVITIES/REQUIREMENTS)

There are various types of training provided to individual in order to get ready for the job and office setting. [14]

1. **Associate degree**:
   Completion of the degree program requires at least 2 years of full-time academic work.

2. **Post-secondary vocational training**:
   Jobs require completion of vocational school training and may require passing an examination after completing the training.

   Post-Secondary Vocational Requirement:
   Job skills/vocational training enable individuals to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to compete in a specific occupation. It may be used only when the training is likely to lead to employment. This activity is provided through existing resources available in the community on a non-reimbursable basis, until such resources have been exhausted. This training is preparation for a specific occupation and is conducted by an instructor in a non-work site or classroom setting. Entry into this activity is restricted, and training is authorized only for programs that can be completed in one year or less. Some college classes may be considered job skills or vocational training when the participant is receiving the same kind of instruction that would be received in a job skills or vocational training venue.

   Placement Criteria
   An individual, who has demonstrated the ability to do the course work and who meets the entrance requirements, may participate when:
   - Their goal is an occupation that requires completion of a vocational course prior to employment; or
   - They have no job skills or have only obsolete or non-marketable skills and must be retrained to find employment; or
   - They do not have a high school diploma/General Equivalency Diploma (GED), and the skill training has been identified as an alternative, which can lead to employment.

[14] U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics. U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics. 14 Aug. 2007 http://www.bls.gov/opub/working/page7b.htm

Standards

The training institution and instructor must meet licensing and certification standards of the appropriate governing agency. Unlicensed or uncertified instructors are not approved for training when licensing or certification standards exist. A participant's evaluation for an appropriate skill training situation must include appropriate testing when the individual does not have a high school diploma or a GED. No client may be assigned to training unless the worker is assured the client will accept training-related employment upon completion of the training.

3. **Short-term on-the-job training (OJT):**
   Workers develop the skills needed after a short demonstration or up to one month of on-the-job experience or instruction.

4. **Moderate-term on-the-job training:**
   Workers develop the skills needed after 1 to 12 months of combined on-the-job experience and informal training.

5. **Long-term on-the-job training:**
   Jobs require more than 12 months of on-the-job training or combined work experience and classroom instruction.

CAREER PLANNING

One of the facets that will assist you in the search for independence is becoming employed. Once employed, you will be financially independent from outside sources. Career planning is a long-term process, where you realize your potential, explore your interests, and design an action plan to reach your goals. You should know your disability is not a barrier to enter into the competitive job market. Good career planning helps you to identify the job that meets your criteria and assists you in step-by-step manner. Career planning is an ever-evolving process, which should be flexible to your needs and desires which might change over time.

You should know:

- Your expectations for career choice(s)
- The hours you can work every day
- If you are an early bird or night owl
- Your likes and dislikes
- If you are a leader or a follower
- Your strengths and limitations, your accessibility needs, transportation , and what work accommodations do you need
- If you can work well under pressure and meet deadlines in time.
- Yourself, if there are any skills you need to acquire to be well versed on your job
- The job description of the job you are applying for

What do you need to do?

- Register at your career services and keep in contact with your Office of Disability Services.
- Prepare yourself disclosure plan because it is very important to inform your colleagues, supervisors, and peers about your disability. They need to learn how to assist you.
- Organize your resources: portfolio(s), resume, job listings, and brochures of possible employers.
- Start networking with people whom you think are important to help you with advice and information of possible career options. Build a contact list of people who you can put on references while applying for jobs.
- Consider job shadowing people in your potential occupational career choices.
- Find University clubs that trigger your interests and get involved. (It will give you opportunities and develop skills to participate in community and voice your opinions)
- It is recommended you decide on your major(s) by your sophomore year.

Who do you consult?

- Think about the people that are important to you and have influenced you in a positive way.
- It is always helpful to have a mentor (doesn't have to be official) who can help you answer quick question about your career plans. Remember, your mentor can be your friend, cousin, relative, or senior.
- Your university's career services is the most significant resource to guide you through building a good resume, and help you prepare for your interview.
- Your career services and disability services will guide you with the tools you need to market yourself in a competitive job market.
- The instructors, professors can make referrals to Independent Living Centers or other agencies which can provide job placement services, job coaches etc.
- Consult with your local vocational rehabilitation counselor to discuss possible occupations, job training, placement and counseling.

What do I need to start?

- Prepare a Resume with work experiences along with a cover letter.
- Mention your class projects and their results.
- Remember what you did in college that matters to your employer.
- Educational prerequisites for your job like pertinent to educational degrees.
- Gather as much experience as you can from your University clubs, internships and volunteer work.
- Confidence, people skills, basic knowledge of computer application is something employers look for while hiring.
- Completing the application is the most important part of the process. It's the company's legal responsibility records to verify the information.
- Interviewing skills are very important so practice mock interviews with feedback are important.

Where do you "see" yourself in next 1 year/ 5 years/ 10 years?

- It is always helpful to have a written plan of your goals and have it in a place where you will see it every day.
- Having a specific and timely goal can help you keep on track.
- Estimated timelines
- Break the goal up in small pieces

CAREER & EDUCATIONAL PLANNING PORTFOLIOS FOR JOB INTERVIEWS

A Career and Educational Planning Portfolio is essential for every student. The portfolio should have documentations of career exploration experiences; contain inventory results and research; and serve as a reference tool. One of the most important things for students to do is to receive their completed portfolio prior to their graduation. A typical student portfolio should contain the following:

- School activities such as clubs, offices held, honors and awards, athletic participation
- Hobbies and leisure activities
- Interest and/or ability inventory results
- Work experience, including part-time, volunteering, job-shadowing, mentorship
- A resume

You must have a job interview folder prepared before going to any interviews in order to exhibit your accomplishments. Buy a number of file folders or document envelopes and create an "interview folder" you take to every job interview. Some of the items are the same for each interview; some are customized for a particular employer and position. Make sure you have extra copies of each documents in order to leave behind any of the documents the potential employer may need.

What to put into the job interview folder?

- Five to ten copies of your resume to take to the interview and leave behind.
- A printed list of your references to leave behind.
- Any letters of reference from employers or professors, with copies to leave behind.
- Your current company literature, job description, and organization chart.
- Your personal compensation history, for referral only.
- Any written performance appraisals you have permission to share.
- Any memos or letters that confirm awards or achievements.
- An official college transcript if you are a recent graduate.
- Your company fact file with your research notes on the company and the cover letter you sent to the company.
- If appropriate, a sample portfolio of your writing or other work that demonstrates your knowledge and competence.
- After the interview, write a follow-up thank you for the interview along with reaffirming your interest in the position.

What is Supplemental Security Income (SSI)?

It is a federally funded program that is run through the Social Security Administration (SSA). It is based on individual needs. It pays monthly checks to people with low income who are 65 or older, are blind, or have a disability. SSI can also help with monthly checks for disabled children. People who receive SSI will generally also be eligible for food stamps. A person who receives SSI is automatically eligible for Medicaid, which helps pay for medical bills.

There are rules that must be followed:

- If you are eligible for SS or other benefits, you must apply for them.
- Must live in the U.S or Northern Mariana Islands
- You must be a US citizen
- If you're disabled, you must accept vocational rehabilitation services if they're offered.

Make an Appointment

You can visit your local Social Security office or visit and get information from www.socialsecurity.gov call SSA at **1-800-772-1213** for an appointment with a representative who will help you. Request a "Disability Starter Kit."

Parents or guardians can apply for disabled children under 18.

So I got this far: Now what?

Once an appointment is made and you need to get yourself ready. Some of the things you and/or your parents should bring:

- Your social security card or record of your social security number.
- If you have not applied for a social security card you should do so at the meeting.
- Bring your birth certificate or other proof of your age.
- Information about the home where you live, such as your mortgage or your lease and landlord's name.
- Payroll slips, bankbooks, insurance policies, car registration, latest W-2 form. Burial fund records and other information about your income and the things you own.
- If you want SSI checks to go directly into your bank account, you should bring your check book or any other papers you have that show your name and account number. Many people choose to have their checks sent to the bank. They find it safer and easier than getting their checks by mail. But the choice is yours.

Are there any other benefits?

There are some services that are available for your area (county or state). Some of the programs are:

- Medicare to help pay for medical expenses, the telephone number is **1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-6334227)**,
- Food stamps which can be applied for at the food stamp office
- For more information you can look at **www.socialsecurity.gov**

18TH BIRTHDAY

Your 18th birthday: the celebration of you attaining the age of responsibility and maturity. At the age of majority, Minnesota State Laws allows you the rights and responsibilities to make choices adults are expected to make.

What You Should Know

- All rights provided to the parents are transferred to the student after the age of 18.
- You have the full right to make decision about your education (IDEA gives the state authority to elect this provision).
- Your IEP counselor will inform you of your rights and issue a statement that you have been informed of your rights.
- You are the primary participant in developing your IEP.
- You are now responsible for making other decisions, such as consenting to any changes in placement or requesting mediation or due process hearings to resolve disputes.
- Avoid being overprotected by your parents and seek independence to do basic life skills.
- Make informed decisions.
- Right to vote.
- You are now responsible for your own behavior and actions.

What is provided by the Law?

There is a transfer of rights at the age of majority, beginning at least one year prior to the student reaching the age under state law. The student's IEP must include a statement that the student has been informed that his or her rights under Part B, if any, will transfer. The school must comply with IDEA notification requirements to both the student and the parents.

When the student reaches the age of majority under State law (except for a child with a disability who has been determined to be incompetent under State law)

A. The public agency shall provide any notice required by IDEA to both the individual and the parents
B. All other rights accorded to parents under IDEA transfer to the student;
C. The agency shall notify the individual and the parents of the transfer of rights; and
D. All rights accorded to parents under IDEA transfer to children who are incarcerated in an adult or juvenile Federal, State, or local correctional institution [20 U.S.C. 1415(m)].[15]

[15] National Center on Secondary Education and Transition. 13 June 2005. National Center on Secondary Education and Transition. 14 Aug. 2007. <http://www.ncset.org/publications/viewdesc.asp?id=318>

All male U.S. citizens, and male aliens living in the U.S., who are 18 through 25, are required to register with Selective Service.

Men with disability must register for selective service at the age of 18 as well. The military does not currently have a classification system for disabled individuals.

Men can register for selective service by filling out a mail back registration form at the post office. They can also fill out the reminder mail back sent to them in the mail. Checking "yes" in box number 29 on the FAFSA form will also work. Many high schools also assist in registering young men for selective service, so check with yours.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Assistive technology (AT) is helpful for people having any kind of disability such as cognitive to physical impairments. The better informed you are about AT the greater the chances you will experience success in school, at work, in daily living. AT is out there in all forms and price ranges, you just have to figure out what you can afford and what you need. The Internet has been a very useful and important resource for getting information on current assistive technology resources.

The article *Assistive Technology for Kids with Learning Disabilities* describes assistive technology "…as any device, piece of equipment, or system that helps bypass, work around, or compensate for an individual's specific learning deficits." (Stanberry and Raskind). AT also helps you be independent, confident, and successful in what you do. AT addresses these modifications with the help of special computer software, and online training manuals. According to Stanberry and Raskind, AT tools for people with disabilities includes:

- Abbreviation expanders
- Alternative keyboards
- Audio books and publications
- Electronic math worksheets
- Free-form database software
- Graphic organizers and outlining
- Information/data managers
- Optical character recognition
- Personal FM Listening Systems
- Portable word processors
- Proofreading or speech recognition programs
- Speech synthesizers/Screen Readers
- Talking Calculators
- Talking spell-checkers and electronic dictionaries
- Variable speed tape recorders
- Word prediction programs

Before choosing any AT for any individual, one must recognize their specific need and challenges, your strength, interest, skill and experience. There are other forms of technologies, which somewhat differ from AT, that helps all students including students with disabilities. These may be the Instructional software which is used to develop specific academic skills. The Adaptive Technology Resource Center (ATRC) has located key websites that focus on specific issues and products concerning the ever changing world of assistive technology. You can always use the websites listed on Pages 65 and 66 in this manual to find out about the technology that will work for you.

The Disabilty Rights and Independent Living Movements
"I am a slow walker, but I never walk backward… be not deceived, my friends, revolutions do not go backward." Lincoln

Prior to the 1960's, people with significant disabilities were invariably incarcerated in state-run institutions. People with mental illness, developmental disabilities, and sensory or physical disabilities were kept in appalling and inhumane conditions often far worse than criminals were subjected to, even at the time. Deinstitutionalization is a process that began to occur in the 1960's in which people with significant disabilities were gradually released from institutions to return to their communities where treatment was to be available. This process created for the first time in American history an opportunity, an imperative, for people with disabilities to live free and independent lives. From this, a community and a culture with history, values, and an objective were born. As with any minority, the real battle would come in winning the support of the public. The movement toward deinstitutionalization came about through disability activism, but another historically important factor was the emergence of new technologies and medications, coupled with an expectation of even better assistive technology. Although deinstitutionalization was a victory for the disability community, the public did not yet believe that people with disabilities were entirely entitled to their civil and human rights regardless of disability.

Emancipation from state-run institutions came for the disability community amidst massive Civil Rights Movements nationally and abroad. Leaders of the disability community began to realize that our human rights and civil liberties would come only as we fought for them, and that we would have to fight in the street to have our voice heard in Washington in order to enact anti-discrimination and civil rights laws that applied to people with disabilities directly. With most state-run institutions closed, people with significant disabilities became more visible, and more audible, too. But society's unwelcoming attitude did not change. This situation created an opportunity for the private medical industry to appropriate the position once held by state-run institutions. Nursing home expansion allowed society to avoid integration of people with disabilities while maintaining a clean conscience, as the nursing home industry began to spin the issue as a social welfare cause. All the while, they pushed policies that would make it almost impossible for a person to leave a nursing home once they had entered. The nursing home industry worked to enact laws that created an "institutional bias," which means that the government will pay for needed services for a person residing in a nursing home, but not for the same services provided in one's own home, even when the cost is less. For people who depend on these services, this effectively means that they may never be able to leave a nursing home. With people with disabilities out of sight and out of mind, segregation remained a viable option for America and the nursing home industry became a formidable and affluent opponent for the Disability Rights Movement.

Beginning in the 1940's and 50's, people with disabilities began to organize for political change. Leagues developed for "The Blind," "The Deaf," and "The Physically

Handicapped," advocated for an end to discrimination in Federal programs, education, and employment. Disability-specific advocacy efforts initiated and pioneered the Disability Rights Movement and realized significant accomplishments in opportunities available to people with disabilities, but real political power was achieved with the dawn of the Independent Living Movement, which is founded in the belief that people with disabilities, regardless of the form, have a common history and a shared struggle, that we are a community and a culture that will advance further banded together politically.

The Independent Living Movement articulated and embodied the values of the Disability Rights Movement. One critical aspect of Independent Living philosophy is the conversion from the Medical Model to the Independent Living Model (or Social Model) of understanding disability, which gave people with disabilities a new way of understanding our identities as people with disabilities. As it developed and took hold the political identity of people with disabilities cemented itself. Protests, occupations, and other acts of civil disobedience intended to gain basic civil rights for people with disabilities were held nation-wide. Heroes of the Disability Rights Movement realized sweeping legal victories over the years, including the overriding of President Nixon's veto of the Rehabilitation Act by Congress and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (formerly the Education of all Handicapped Children Act), which requires that children with disabilities be educated in the least restrictive environment possible.

"Let the shameful wall of exclusion finally come tumbling down."

Ed Roberts and other disability activists founded the first recognized and funded Center for Independent Living in Berkeley, California. Centers for Independent Living were created to be run by and for people with disabilities, and offer support, advocacy, and information on empowerment in the attainment of independence from a peer viewpoint, a perspective that was hitherto excluded from participation in the discussion and execution of "services for the disabled."

Ed Roberts is often referred to as the "Father of Independent Living." Ed faced audacious discrimination in his educational pursuits. He first encountered adversity in high school, advocating for the physical education and driving license requirements to be waived, and the diploma he had earned granted. The California Department of Rehabilitation refused his request for financial aid to attend college on the basis that he was "too disabled" to work. The University of California accepted him as a student, but later rescinded their decision with the comment by one Dean, "We've tried cripples before and it didn't work." After going public with his story, both the University and the Department of Rehabilitation reconsidered their positions and Ed eventually went on to become the head of the Department of Rehabilitation, the very same agency that had dismissed him as unemployable fifteen years earlier.

After winning her right to a public education after having been declared a Fire Hazard, Judy Heumann faced similar discrimination in access to employment in her field. The New York City Board of Education refused to allow her to teach on the basis that she could not pass a physical education exam. She eventually persuaded the Board that their

decision was discriminatory and taught elementary school for three years before going on to found Disabled in Action in New York.

"When I actually applied for my teaching credentials you had to take three exams, a written exam, an oral exam and a medical exam. All three of those exams were given in completely inaccessible buildings. So I had to be carried up 1 to 2 flights of stairs depending on where I had to go; I passed the oral exam and I passed the written exam but I failed the medical exam and the board wrote down that I failed because I couldn't walk and so we sued and when I sued the Board of Ed that was the beginning of many things. …In essence what they were saying was I was a fire hazard. I couldn't walk. So suing the Board of Ed and getting that credential and actually teaching really helped me realize that …when you begin to push, push, push, in many cases you can beat the system."

Across the country, other Centers for Independent Living began to grow simultaneously in Houston, Boston, and Chicago. Wade Blank and the Atlantis Community established ADAPT, an activist organization that reformed access for people with disabilities to public transit and continues its fight for deinstitutionalization today. These are often remembered as the glory days of the Disability Rights Movement, fondly recalled by activists, and rightly so, as they carried out some of the most daring protests in American Civil Rights history, including the longest occupation of a Federal building in history April 5th through May 1st, 1972. In conjunction, rallies and sit-ins were held in nine cities across the country, and the action led to the release of the regulations of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which bans discrimination against people with disabilities in federally funded programs.

Independent Living philosophy emphasizes consumer control, the idea that people with disabilities are the best experts on their own needs, having crucial and valuable perspective to contribute and deserving of equal opportunity to decide how to live, work, and take part in their communities, particularly in reference to services that powerfully affect their day-to-day lives and access to independence.

As the Independent Living philosophy took hold nationally and the Disability Rights Movement gained acceptance and political influence, a grassroots movement for a comprehensive disability rights law was implemented. The Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, public transportation, places of business and other services available to the public was signed into law July 26, 1990 by President George H.W. Bush. Though the Act is often misinterpreted, the preamble states its intent clearly,

"Enactment of the ADA reflects deeply held American ideals which treasure the contributions which individuals can make when free from arbitrary, unjust, or outmoded societal attitudes and practices that prevent the realization of their potential. The ADA reflects a recognition that the surest path to America's continued vitality, strength and vibrancy is through the full realization of the contributions of all of its citizens. The Disability Rights Movement has achieved a sizable presence only over the course of the past twenty years. In contrast to earlier conceptions of disability, it presupposes the human potential of people with disabilities, maintains that people with disabilities have

the competence and should have the right to govern their lives, and holds that the proper goals of public policy are the creation of meaningful equal opportunity encouraging the growth and integration of people with disabilities into society. And it maintains that the elimination of a multitude of attitudinal, communication, transportation, policy and physical barriers based on erroneous assumptions about disability will result in a substantial enhancement of the productive integration of people with disabilities into our society."

Today, Centers for Independent Living and other Disability Rights organizations fight similar battles to ensure that the rights of individuals with disabilities, as well as people with disabilities as a class are protected. Even with the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, people with disabilities often find that advocacy and support from the disability community and the Disability Rights Movement is an essential element in enforcement of the civil rights law. Though the ADA provides a useful legal groundwork for understanding the rights guaranteed to Americans through a disability perspective, society as a whole still embraces the negative and paternalistic attitudes that restrict us from participating fully in our communities and gaining access to basic civil rights, such as voting, opportunity for gainful employment, and equal education.

The Disability Rights Movement today is not a cause among a multitude of other causes, with an agenda simply competing for attention of lawmakers. Many of the issues we fight for have strong opposition and powerful lobbyists in the for-profit sector. It is imperative that the Disability Rights Movement and leaders of the Independent Living Movement remain dedicated to the community values, objectives, and unity built on our history and experiences, lest we lose the fundamental civil and human rights we have won, though not fully seized. [16]

[16] National Council on Independent Living www.ncil.org

EDUCATIONAL COOPERATIVE SERVICE UNITS

What are they?
Educational Cooperative Service Units (ECSU) are organizations that work together in the spirit of cooperation and collaboration to provide programs and services in school districts, non-profit organizations, cities, counties, and other governmental agencies in their region.[17]

What are the services that they provide?
They provide students with special needs assistive technology, transitional planning, and services related specifically to their disability.

How to reach them?
The 9 ECSU in Minnesota are listed below.

NW Service Cooperative
114 West 1st Street
Thief River Falls, MN 56701
Phone: 218-681-0900
http://www.nw-service.k12.mn.us/

SW/WC Service Cooperatives
1420 East College Drive
Marshall, MN 56258
Phone: 507-537-2240
http://www.swsc.org/

Southeast Service Cooperative
210 Wood Lake Drive SE
Rochester, Minnesota 55904
Phone: 507-288-1282
https://www.ssc.coop/

Resource Training and Solutions
137 23rd Street South, Suite 201
Sartell, MN 56377
Phone: 320-255-3236
www.resourcetraining.com/

Northeast Service Cooperative
5525 Emerald Avenue
Mountain Iron, MN 55768
218-741-0750 V/TDD
http://www.nesc.k12.mn.us/

Lakes Country Service Cooperative
1001 E. Mount Faith
Fergus Falls, MN 56537
Phone: 218-739-3273
https://www.lcsc.org/

South Central Service Cooperative
2075 Lookout Drive
North Mankato, MN 56003
Phone: 507-389-1425
http://www.mnscsc.org/

Metro ECSU
2 Pine Tree Drive, Suite 101
Arden Hills, MN 55112
612-638-1500
http://metroecsu.org/index.html

North Central Service Cooperative
202 12th Street NE, PO Box 219
Staples, MN 56479
Phone: 888-894-1930
https://www.sourcewell-mn.gov/

[17] https://www.swsc.org/domain/11

Vocational Rehabilitation

What is Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)?

Vocational rehabilitation services provide students with disabilities opportunities to explore their capabilities through assistance with vocational planning, employment information, referral services, and many more services. The main goal of vocational rehabilitation is to assist students with disabilities in attaining a lifestyle of independence and self-reliance through a source of income.

Who is eligible for VR?

People with disabilities are the priority for VR. People with disabilities are serviced on a scale with the most severe being served first. Individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) are most of the time presumed to be eligible for services. To be eligible for services, a person must require vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment. They must be an "individual with a disability" which is defined as a person who "has a physical or mental impairment which constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment for the individual; and can benefit from VR services to achieve an employment outcome." You can submit a written application for services or you can "request" services. A VR counselor will tell you within 60 days after you apply if you can get services.

What services can VR provide?

- Counseling
- Training
- Finding a job
- Keeping a job
- Assistive Technology

Your rights with VR:

- To be treated with respect
- To participate in the life of your community
- To accept or reject a job offered to you
- To know what your wages are and how they are determined
- To ask for and receive help
- To be paid for the work you do
- To see information that is kept by service providers about you
- To participate in planning the services you want
- To work in a safe place
- To choose a lifestyle that matches your interests

Where to start?

To find services that can help you live independently, start by meeting a counselor at any Vocational Rehabilitation field office. Your counselor will help you decide which services are best for you.

A helpful website sponsored by the Department of Employment and Economic Development: http://www.positivelyminnesota.com/jobseekers/people_with_disabilities

Your VR counselor might also refer you to one of Minnesota's eight Centers for Independent Living. (CIL)

What is a Center for Independent Living (CIL)?

A Center for Independent Living must provide four (4) core services, including:

- Advocacy – Individual and Systems
- Independent Living Skills Training
- Information Referral & Assistance
- Peer Counseling – including cross-disability peer counseling

Service Delivery:

A Center for Independent Living provides its services in the least restrictive environment, as chosen by the consumer. Thus the majority of SWCIL's services are delivered to consumers in their homes and communities where they live, work and go to school.

A Center for Independent Living must demonstrate the following:

- **Consumer Control** of the Center regarding decision making, service delivery, management, establishment of policy and direction of the Center.
- **Community Based**
- **Cross Disability** ensuring that services are provided to individuals with a diversity of significant disabilities and individuals who are members of populations that are unserved or underserved.
- **Nonresidential** private nonprofit agency that is designed and operated within a local community by individuals with disabilities and provides an array of independent living services.
- **Promotes Self-Help and Self-Advocacy** among individuals with significant disabilities.

To locate a CIL nearest to you, go to: www.macil.org

Transition Services for Students

High school students with disabilities that affect their ability to plan and prepare for work may apply for transition services through our vocational rehabilitation program.

Types of Services Available

Services are custom-tailored for individual students. They include helping students to set employment goals and identify the steps and services necessary for achieving their goals. Students' written plans might call for on-the-job training or for degree programs at two- or four-year technical school or college.

Common services might include interest and ability testing, informational interviewing or career exploration services. Other services include payment for materials and equipment, assistive technology, job placement, and job-seeking skills training.

VRS staff work with each student and their IEP team to create an individualized employment plan that helps students make informed choices about their job goals and identifies which services are needed and who will provide them.

Students may decide to develop plans on their own or with the help of someone of their choosing. But it is important to know that our vocational rehabilitation services staff must approve these plans prior to purchasing services.

When to Apply for Services

The best time to seek a referral for services is usually about two years before high school graduation, typically near the beginning of the student's junior year. Students with disabilities who are planning to leave school before graduation or who have already dropped out may seek an immediate referral to the school's vocational rehabilitation counselor.

Start with a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

Vocational rehabilitation counselors are assigned to every high school in Minnesota. They help students find full-time work in the regular labor market and earn the same wages and benefits for the position as any other worker.

Select from the links below to find the counselor that comes to your school

- Find the VRS counselor that comes to your school
- Contact a Rehabilitation Services Regional Area Manager

Eligibility for Services

In order to qualify services, students must meet certain eligibility criteria. They include:

- Documentation of a physical or mental condition that causes a substantial impediment to employment.
- Evidence that the individual requires vocational rehabilitation services in order to prepare for, secure, obtain or retain employment
- The presumption that the individual is able to benefit from vocational rehabilitation services.

Documentation of a disability is usually obtained from the student's school assessment or from a medical/psychological provider's statement or records. If the student is not able to provide this documentation, the high school's vocational rehabilitation counselor will obtain it with written consent.

Cost of Services
There is no charge for counseling, job placement and several other services. For some purchased services, a sliding fee schedule based on family income may apply. A family whose income is higher than the guidelines may be asked to pay part or all of the cost.

For More Information
Contact Abbie Wells-Herzog at 952.703.3181 or at Abbie.Wells.Herzog@state.mn.us.

For High School Transition Staff

Each fall, our vocational rehabilitation counselors contact appropriate school staff to establish a calendar for visiting schools and meeting with students. They work out a mutually acceptable plan for communicating with staff and students.

Referring Students for Services
A high school student with a disability that affects his or her ability to plan and prepare for work should have the opportunity to learn about vocational rehabilitation services.

The best time for a referral is usually about two years before high school graduation, typically near the beginning of the junior year. If a student with a disability is planning to leave school before graduation -- or has dropped out -- an immediate referral to the high school's VRS counselor makes good sense.

Individual schools may have differing procedures for making referrals for vocational rehabilitation services. Be sure and follow your school's procedures. School staff and the school's assigned VRS counselor work together with a student to create a plan for future success.

- Find the VRS counselor that comes to your school
- Contact a Rehabilitation Services Regional Area Manager

It is not necessary for you to know whether a student is eligible before you make a referral for services. Once you make the referral, we'll make the assessments.

Eligibility and Documentation
In order to qualify for vocational rehabilitation services, students must meet the following basic eligibility criteria. There must be:

- Documentation of a physical or mental condition that causes a substantial impediment to employment
- Evidence that the individual requires services in order to prepare for, obtain and retain employment
- The presumption that the individual is able to benefit from services

Documentation of a disability is usually obtained from the student's school assessment or from a psychological report or from a medical provider's statements or records. If the student is not able to provide this documentation, the VR counselor will obtain it with written consent.

If a disability is suspected but not documented, school staff may still want to refer students for services. In cases where the student does not have an IEP/IIIP/504 plan or has not been diagnosed with a qualifying condition, school staff should consult with the VRS counselor assigned to their school. VRS may provide diagnostic services to determine eligibility, at no cost to the student's family or the school.

Cost of Services
There is no charge for determining a student's eligibility, for counseling, job placement, and most other vocational rehabilitation services. There is a sliding fee, based on family income, for some purchased services.

Paying for Services While a Student is Still in High School
The student's needs and the terms of the IEP/IIIP/504 plan and VRS employment plan should drive service decisions. Minnesota's secondary schools are required to provide a student's transition services while the student remains in school.

Typically, our vocational rehabilitation unit does not fund services until the student graduates or leaves school. However, in some cases it may be appropriate to provide a vocational rehabilitation service before graduation. Sharing of such costs can be discussed.

Collaborating Effectively with Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Because ongoing communication between school staff and VRS is an important step for student success, VRS should be invited to all student IEP and IIIP meetings. The earlier that VRS is notified of a meeting, the greater the likelihood they will be able to attend.

Data Practices Policies
VRS can receive names of students that a school would like to refer for a VRS orientation as well as perform orientation sessions with students without written consent.

VRS must have a copy of written consent from a student (and parent or guardian where appropriate) in order to speak with school staff about a student's personal information, including obtaining and releasing information in an IEP meeting.

VRS must have a signed Tennessen Notice from a student (and parent or guardian where appropriate) to obtain personal information from them.[18]

For More Information
http://www.positivelyminnesota.com >Job Seekers > People with Disabilities> High School Students > Pre-Employment Transition Services

[18] http://www.positivelyminnesota.com/JobSeekers/People_with_Disabilities/For_Youth_Young_Adults/index.aspx

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), in cooperation with its county partners, helps people meet their basic needs so they can live in dignity and achieve their highest potential. Consumers include: seniors who need help paying for hospital and nursing home bills or who need home-delivered meals, families with children who need help during a financial crisis, parents who need child support enforcement or child care money, and people with physical or developmental disabilities who need assistance to live as independently as possible.

Programs under the Minnesota DHS include:

- Medical Assistance (MA)
- General Assistance Medical Care (GAMC)
- Minnesota Care
- Minnesota Family Investment Program (Minnesota's version of the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program)
- General Assistance (GA)
- Child protection
- Child support enforcement
- Child welfare services
- Services for people who are mentally ill, chemically dependent or have physical or developmental disabilities.

DHS also provides direct service through its regional offices for the deaf and hard of hearing and through State Operated Services, which provides direct care to people with disabilities and those who pose a risk to public safety.

For more information regarding the Minnesota Department of Human Services, visit the website below for a list of Human Services topics.

http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/idcplg?IdcService=GET_DYNAMIC_CONVERSION&RevisionSelectionMethod=LatestReleased&dDocName=id_000067

What are Semi-Independent Living Services (SILS)?

Semi-independent living services are services that include training and assistance in managing money, preparing meals, shopping, personal appearance and hygiene and other activities needed to maintain and improve an adult with mental retardation's capacity to live in the community. A goal of SILS is to support people in ways that will enable them to achieve personally desired outcomes and lead self-directed lives.

Who is eligible for SILS?

To be eligible to receive SILS, the recipient must meet the following criteria:

- Be 18 years of age or older
- Be determined to have mental retardation or a related condition
- Be unable to function independently without semi-independent living services

What services are available through SILS?

Reimbursable costs include training and assistance in:

- First aid and obtaining assistance in an emergency
- Learning and exercising rights and responsibilities of community living
- Nutrition, meal planning, and preparation
- Obtaining and maintaining a home
- Personal appearance and hygiene
- Self-administration of medication
- Shopping
- Social, recreation, and transportation skills, including appropriate social behavior
- Using the phone and other utilities

Additional ways to use SILS include:

- Contract with unlicensed providers who are not related to the person to provide support services
- Issue vouchers or cash grants to enable persons to pay providers for their services
- Provide one-time housing allowances of up to $1,500 to cover some of the costs (Couldn't find amount) related to damage or security deposits for housing rentals, utility deposits and connection costs, household furnishings and other items necessary to enable the participant to secure a home in which to receive semi-independent living services

How can persons apply for SILS?

You can contact your local county agency to apply for SILS. The amount, type, cost and expected outcomes of SILS to be provided must be indicated when services are authorized. [19]

[19]Minnesota Department of Human Services. 11 July 2018. Minnesota Department of Human Services. 11 July 2018 <http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/>

Personal Care Assistance (PCA) Program

PCA Consumer Information

Personal care assistance services help a person with day-to-day activities in their home and community. It is one of several home care services available to people enrolled in a Minnesota Health Care Program.

Go to this web link http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/idcplg?IdcService=GET_DYNAMIC_CONVERSION&RevisionSelectionMethod=LatestReleased&dDocName=dhs16_161198# to find the following information.

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A-Z glossary and index

General Information

Who can get PCA services?

You must:

- Enroll with Medical Assistance (MA), Minnesota Care expanded benefits, Alternative Care or a waiver program
- Make decisions about your care or have someone to make decisions for you
- Provide for your own health and safety or have a responsible party that is able to do so
- Live in a home or apartment, not in an institution
- Meet access criteria
- Have a PCA assessment to see if you qualify for services

What can a PCA do for me?

Visit PCA services policy for details on the four categories of service. PCAs provide services and supports to help you with:

- Activities of daily living
- Health related procedures and tasks
- Observation and redirection of behaviors
- Instrumental activities of daily living

What are my responsibilities?

PCA services are designed to be flexible and driven by you. You should keep the following in mind:

- Allow your assessor and qualified professional into your home. You must have a PCA assessment and QP supervision to receive PCA services.
- Provide honest and accurate answers to assessor's questions
- Do not ask your PCA to help or take care of others in your home
- Do not ask your PCA to complete tasks not allowed by state law
- Review and sign accurate time sheets
- Keep track of the hours of PCA services you have used

If you are using the PCA Choice option, you have additional responsibilities.[20]

[20] http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/idcplg?IdcService=GET_DYNAMIC_CONVERSION&RevisionSelectionMethod=LatestReleased&dDocName=dhs16_161198#

How Do I Apply for Financial Aid?

To apply for financial aid, you can use the US Department of Education's **Free Application for Federal Student Aid** (FAFSA).

In order to start financial aid you need a code or PIN number. You can get this number from www.pin.ed.gov. You will need this PIN number to use as your signature in an electronic FAFSA. If you are listed as a dependent student underneath your parents, they should then apply for a PIN number as well in order to co-sign the papers. So electronically, their PIN number would be considered their signature.

It will take a few days (one to five) to get the PIN number, so do not worry. It will come in an e-mail; otherwise if it is mailed, it will take seven to ten days. **Do not share the PIN number with anyone, it is your signature.**

There is a worksheet form of the FAFSA, it is best to fill the paper form out first. Then fill out the form electronically at www.FAFSA.ed.gov. Filling out the FAFSA form online makes the process faster, and you will know the results of what you would be eligible for quicker than sending it on paper. If you find questions you are not sure of, you can always come back to them or skip them if they do not apply to you. If you cannot figure out if a question applies to you call for help at **1-800-4-fed-aid (1-800-433-3243).** Once you are finished, submit your application. You'll get a confirmation notice right away when you click on "Submit My FAFSA Now."

Your information is safe. Remember your PIN number is never going to expire. Put it in a safe place and do not have an online help person do it. Your PIN is important and can be used to recheck your work and to review the processed information. You can also review grants and loans you have received. If you have questions the number is **1-800-433-3243.**

To check and follow up on your FAFSA, you will be receiving a Student Aid Report. You will get this in the mail after submitting your FAFSA online. If your e-mail is valid, they will send you an e-mail within five days of your send in date. If you did not receive anything, you should check online on www.FAFSA.ed.gov.

When you get your Student Aid Report make sure your answers are correct with other documents that may pertain to your financial records. With your PIN you can check it anytime.

Scholarships

When looking for scholarships during the transition process, students with disabilities should be aware of scholarships allocated by each specific post-secondary institution, private and local sources (Community/School).

DRS Allocation Changes:

If you receive a scholarship and use DRS services to pay for college tuition, the amount of money DRS allocates for your tuition may be subtracted by the scholarship award. It is possible to be awarded more money in scholarships than what your DRS counselor would designate to you.

Post-Secondary Institution-Specific Scholarships:

University-specific scholarships are given to the university by alumni, local businesses, foundations, and other people friendly to the institution. To obtain these scholarships, students must meet certain guidelines for each scholarship and apply through the institution's financial aid office.[21] Note: Sometimes scholarships are given through the institution's academic departments and have their own guidelines. For these scholarships, students usually apply through the specific departments.

Scholarships from Private and Local Sources:

Privately provided scholarships are considered a part of a financial aid package for each student. Note: When you receive one of these scholarships, you are required to inform the Financial Aid Office. It is encouraged to contact your high school, organizations in your area regarding available scholarships. In addition there are many scholarship search engines on the internet. See the Links Section or try the following search engines:

http://www.finaid.org/ https://www.fastweb.com/

[21] < http://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/financialaid/index.html>

Grants

How do I apply for Grants?

To apply for all grants you must first fill out a FAFSA form. Based on financial need, you will be rewarded any federal (national) grant. For grants from the state of Minnesota, more information is required than just filling out the FAFSA. You have to go to your individual institution's (University's) Financial Aid Office and go through their process.

What Grants are available?

Federal Pell Grant
Funds for this grant are available throughout the year. Aid is made available to eligible undergraduate students who are enrolled in 3 credits or more. During the 2007-2008 year, Pell Grants will range from $400 to $4,310**.**

Federal Academic Competitiveness Grant
To apply for this grant, students must be first or second year full-time undergraduates, be a U.S. citizen, be awarded the Pell Grant and have completed a rigorous high school program. The award is up to $750 for freshman and up to $1,300 for sophomores.

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)

This grant is awarded to a limited number of eligible students. These awards require students to be eligible for the Federal Pell Grant. Students are encouraged to apply to complete the FAFSA application by February 15 for top consideration of these funds.

Minnesota State Grant Program

The Minnesota Office of Higher Education annually awards grants to eligible Minnesota residents. Students must submit their FAFSA application to the Federal Processors no later than 30 days after the start date of the first term for which they are applying and must check with their institution's financial aid office to apply.

Loans

Loans are borrowed money that **must** be repaid with interest. Students **cannot** have these loans canceled because of financial difficulty or being displeased with the education they received. These loans are a **serious** obligation, so students need to think about the amount that must be repaid before taking out a loan.

There are several types of loans:

- **Federal Perkins Loan** is provided through participating schools to undergraduate and graduate/ professional students.
- **Stafford Loans** are for undergraduate or graduate and professional students made through one of two U.S. Department of Education.
    - William D. Ford Direct Student Loan Program-referred to as **Direct Stafford Loans or Direct Loans**
    - Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program-referred to as **FFEL Stafford Loans or Federal Stafford Loans**
- **PLUS Loans** are loans parents can take out for their dependent undergraduate children and are made through either the Direct Loan or the FFEL program mentioned above.

Here are some facts about Stafford loans:

They are either **subsidized** or **unsubsidized.**

Subsidized
If you are eligible for a subsidized Stafford loan, the federal government will pay the interest on the loan while you: attend college at least half time, you are in your six-month grace period after you graduate or cease at least half-time attendance, and/or are in an authorized deferment.

Unsubsidized
The unsubsidized Stafford loan has all the same terms as the subsidized Stafford loan; however, you are responsible for the interest at all times. The federal government **DOES NOT** pay any interest for you.[22]

[22] https://www.scholarships.com/financial-aid/student-loans/stafford-loans/

Minnesota Student Loans[23]

The definitions of qualified Minnesota college and university costs differ (that is, while one savings or investment option can be used to pay the cost of books or room and board, another might not).

- Each tax benefit and savings incentive option has different phase-in and phase-out periods as well as varying income eligibility requirements.
- The tax advantages of some options are only available in future years, requiring careful planning.

Private Education Loans, also known as Alternative Education Loans, help bridge the gap between the actual cost of your education and the limited amount the government allows you to borrow in its programs. Private loans are offered by private lenders and there are no federal forms to complete. Eligibility for private student loans often depends on your credit score.[24]

Locations for Bank Loans in Minnesota

- **American Heritage National Bank** (Lender code: 806295) - Long Prairie, MN. 612/732-6131. (Stafford, PLUS)
- **IBM Midamerica Employees Federal Credit Union** (819542) - Rochester, MN. 507/288-3425. (Stafford, PLUS)
- **Jennings State Bank** (813611) - Spring Grove, MN. 507/498-5589
- **Melrose Credit Union** (831030) - Melrose, MN. 320/836-2791. (Stafford)
- **TCF National Bank** (821728) - Minneapolis, MN. 800/533-1723 x8100. (Stafford, PLUS)

[23] https://www.selfloan.state.mn.us/faq.cfm
[24] http://www.finaid.org/loans/privateloan.phtml

There are various laws that apply to individuals with disabilities in order to ensure there is a level playing field for all people. While some laws may be applicable to both K-12 education and post-secondary education in some way, there are laws that are specifically for one area or the other. The biggest difference between the two areas is that under K-12 education laws, students with disabilities are entitled to certain assistance. Laws in post-secondary education are civil rights laws for individuals with disabilities. In order to receive the protection, a post-secondary student with a disability must seek out the resources.

What Laws Apply to Students with Disabilities in College?

Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act:

Once a student with a disability transitions into life after high school, he or she must be aware of the laws that apply to students with disabilities after high school. In post-secondary education there are two laws that a student with a disability must know and understand. These laws are Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (1992).

According to Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, *"No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States... shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."*

This requires **any and all** entities that receive federal funding to be equally accessible to both disabled and non-disabled. It does not give preferential to people with disabilities, but instead seeks to level the playing field.

Who falls under Section 504?

Under Section 504, a person with a disability is any person who:

- Has a physical or mental impairment that **substantially limits** one or more major life activities; or
- Has a record of having such an impairment; or
- Regarded as having such impairment.

What does *"regarded as having such impairment"* really mean?

- A student has a physical or mental impairment that does not substantially limit a major life activity, but is treated by the district as having such a limitation (e.g., a student who has scarring, a student who walks with a limp); or
- A student has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity only as a result of the attitudes of others toward such impairment (e.g., a student who has epilepsy and is not allowed to try out for sports or cheerleading); or

- A student who has no physical or mental impairment but is treated as having such an impairment (e.g., a student who tests positive for HIV but has no physical effects from it).

Taken from: http://www.familiestogetherinc.org/50420Handbook.pdf

What is a major life activity?

- Walking
- Seeing
- Hearing
- Speaking
- Care for one's self
- Performing Manual Tasks
- Working or Learning

What does "substantially limits" mean?

"Substantially limits" means the student is unable to or is significantly restricted as to the condition, manner, or duration under which he or she can perform major life activities as compared to the average person. Factors the eligibility team should consider when making this determination include:

- Nature/severity of the impairment,
- Duration/expected duration of the impairment, and
- Permanent/long-term impact resulting from the impairment.

When someone is determining whether condition *substantially limits* a daily activity, he or she must take into account auxiliary aids and/or assistive technology he or she uses. (e.g., medication, hearing aids, glasses)

What does "otherwise qualified" mean?

This term can be a little hard to understand at times. To put it in the simple terms, it means a student must be able to meet all the requirements and standards as all other applicants. In order to meet the requirements of a given program, school or job, a person may request reasonable accommodations in order to meet the requirements.

What does "otherwise qualified" mean in post-secondary education?

"Otherwise Qualified," with respect to post-secondary educational services, means "a person who meets the academic and technical standards requisite to admission or participation in the education program or activity, with or without reasonable modifications to rules, policies or practices; the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers or the provision of auxiliary aids and services."

I have a disability and meet the requirements of Section 504, what do I need to do in order to receive the protections of Section 504?

In post-secondary education, a student **MUST** seek out resources and services themselves. Most colleges have a disability resource center, which may be named various titles, that you can go to and register for the services that you will need in order be successful. It is your job, as the student, to seek out the resources and services.

Americans with Disabilities Act (Title II)

Which entities do the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) apply to?

- Public Schools and Universities
- State and Local Governments
- Federal Government (Legislative and Judicial Branches only)
- Private Employers
- Employment Agencies

How does the ADA define Disability?

The **ADA** upholds and builds on what Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act did. Thus, the **ADA** defines a disability almost the same as the Rehabilitation of 1973.

Some of the essential course activities the **ADA** lists as things an individual must be able to perform, with or without accommodations, in order to be covered under Title II of the **ADA** are:

- **Tasks that are fundamental and necessary to complete the course:** e.g., completing daily reading assignments, either independently or using an acceptable accommodation (e.g., books on tape).
- **Does not include incidental duties:** e.g., providing snacks for the class.
- **Amount of time spent on a specific task or duty:** e.g., completing a paper by the expected due date listed on the syllabus. Instructors may accommodate students with disabilities by allowing them to use alternative testing procedures and formats for their assignments (e.g., for a student with speech impairment, writing a paper rather than giving a presentation); however, students with disabilities can be held to the same work standards as their non-disabled peers (e.g., meeting assignment deadlines, etc.). These are not the only allowable accommodations under the law.
- **What the instructor believes to be an essential course activity:** e.g., subscribing to a class email list serve and checking it regularly. The instructor can set his/her own class requirements as long as these can be verified as important (e.g., the student must have access to email because the large number of students in the class prohibit the instructor from photocopying all handouts, so email document attachments are used to disseminate this information instead).

- **Course requirements performed by past and current students in the course:** e.g. using specific computer software, etc. However, instances where past students have expanded their class participation (i.e., gone beyond what the syllabus requires) are not considered "essential course activities" under the **ADA**.

Under both the **ADA** and Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, a student can request reasonable accommodations.

What are reasonable accommodations?

The *Americans with Disabilities Act Handbook* defines an accommodation as "any change in the work environment [or instructional setting] or in the way things are customarily done that enables an individual with a disability to enjoy equal opportunities." This may include:

- Providing or modifying equipment (e.g., allowing the student to tape-record lectures instead of taking notes).
- Making facilities accessible - removing barriers (e.g., holding class on the ground floor) and make the class accessible so people with disabilities can participate.
- Providing readers or interpreters (e.g., sign language interpreters).[25]

[25] < http://ada.ky.gov/post_sec.htm>

Laws and Responsibilities

High School	Post-secondary
Individuals with Disabilities Act *(IDEA)* Free and Appropriate Education *(FAPE)*	*Section 504* and the Americans with Disabilities *(ADA)* Accessibility and reasonable accommodations
Covers ages three through 21, or until high school diploma requirements are met.	Covers students with disabilities regardless of age (no discrimination in recruitment, admission or after admission, solely on the basis of a disability).
School attendance is mandatory.	Students decide whether to attend classes or not.
If needed, the school can contact the parent.	Contact is limited by privacy laws—the school can only contact a parent or parents if the student gives his or her written permission.
Education is provided at no cost to the student.	Payment of tuition falls on the student—it is his or her responsibility to find a way to pay the tuition.
Schools are required to identify students with disabilities through free assessments.	Students are responsible for revealing and providing current documentation of a disability—they must be self advocates.
Students receive special education and related services to address needs based on an identified disability.	Formal special education services are not available.
Services include individually designed instruction modification and accommodations based on the IEP.	Reasonable accommodation and modifications may be made to provide equal access and participation.
Individual student's needs based on the IEP may be addressed by program support for school personnel.	No formal program support for school personnel is provided.
Progress toward IEP goals is monitored and communicated to the parent(s) and/or the student.	Students are required to monitor their own progress and communicate their needs to instructors.
Schools assist in connecting the student with community support agencies if so identified as a transition need according to the IEP.	Students are responsible for making their own connections with community support agencies.

What supports are available to me?

Definitions
Modifications ~ A change in content or the information that is learned
Accommodations ~ A change in how the content or the information that is learned
Service ~ provided to enhance academic achievement
Auxiliary Aid ~ necessary to ensure effective participation
Assistive Technology ~ computer programs and/or adaptive equipment to aid in learning

Supports	Yes	No	Type
Shortened or content altered tests		◊	Modification
Shortened or content altered assignments		◊	Modification
Shortened or content altered tests		◊	Modification
Open book tests		◊	Modification
Open note tests	◊		Modification
Larger format or wider spacing	◊		Accommodation
Braille	◊		Accommodation
Alternate setting for testing	◊		Accommodation ~Distraction free setting
Extended time for testing	◊		Accommodation ~Time and ½ (1.5X)
Preferential seating	◊		Accommodation ~Medical/physical allowance
Modified furniture or equipment	◊		Accommodation ~Medical/physical allowance
Attendance adjustment	◊		Accommodation ~Medical/physical allowance
Tutor	◊		Service
Proofreader	◊		Service
Taped texts/ e-books	◊		Auxiliary Aid
Note taker	◊		Auxiliary Aid ~classmates notes or [maybe] instructor notes
Interpreter	◊		Auxiliary Aid
Reader	◊		Auxiliary Aid and/or AT
Scribe	◊		Auxiliary Aid and/or AT
Calculator	◊		Auxiliary Aid
Tutorial software	◊		AT
Software (i.e. speech-to-text, text-to-speech, word prediction)	◊		AT
Screen magnifier	◊		AT
Adapted equipment (i.e. keyboard, mouse)	◊		AT

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE CLASSES IN HIGH SCHOOL AND POST- SECONDARY

	High School		Post-Secondary
1.	Class attendance is recorded and required.	1.	Attendance might cover certain part of grading system and depends upon the course syllabus and instructor.
2.	Classes have small number of regular and familiar students.	2.	Classes might vary in number of students (large number depending upon how many students registered for the course).
3.	Text books are inexpensive and are supplemental to class notes. They are usually provided.	3.	Text books are expensive (usually range from $200-500). There are ways to cut down cost. Usually there are student-led used book sales or books ordered online).
4.	Students are assisted to meet the requirements for graduation.	4.	Students are expected to keep track of their graduation requirements and can consult with the registration office if required. Students may access the online degree audit if such set-up is available.
5.	Modification of courses based on IEP reports may be considered.	5.	There will be no such consideration offered, and the IEP report might not hold same validity.
6.	A school year is 36 weeks long.	6.	Depending upon the type of college, the academic year is divided into two semesters or three quarters.
7.	Summer classes are offered, but they might not help speed up graduation times.	7.	Summer classes can speed up graduation.
8.	School produces the schedules for students.	8.	Students are expected to manage their own schedules and find class locations. Best time to do it is right after registering classes.

Differences between the Instructors in High School and Post-Secondary

	High School		Post-Secondary
1.	Instructors cater to students' needs.	1.	Students have to be alert and proactive about their academic requirements.
2.	Instructors ask for the assignments, check completeness, and grade it.	2.	It's your responsibility to turn your assignments by the due date.
3.	The instructor may look out for student's needs and provide assistance.	3.	You have to make your instructor aware about your disability and provide guidance with needed accommodation.
4.	The instructors are aware of special education teaching methods.	4.	Professor is not well-versed on dealing with students with disabilities.
5.	High school instructors are available and ready to help.	5.	You have to make appointments and might be expected to put more effort to solve the problems.
6.	Instructors help make up for missed classes.	6.	Instructors expect students to talk to their classmates to make up for missed classes.
7.	Lectures based more on text book materials.	7.	Lectures include enhanced information about the topic, i.e. not directly based on textbook.
8.	Teaching aids may be limited to blackboard depending upon the course.	8.	Advanced teaching methodology used.
9.	Instructors give reminders about important dates and activities.	9.	Instructors expect students to follow syllabus and college calendars.

Differences between the Studying Techniques in High School and Post-Secondary

	High School		Post-Secondary
1.	Study time outside class may range from one to three hours per week only.	1.	Study time might be lengthy and intense at the ratio of 1 class hour: 2-3 hours outside class.
2.	Instructors may give review of previous class notes and text materials.	2.	Students are expected to review it themselves before they come to the class.
3.	Short reading/writing assignments.	3.	Extensive reading and writing assignment.

Differences between the Testing Procedures in High School and Post-Secondary

	High School		Post-Secondary
1.	Timely testing with small portions.	1.	Big tests might be two to three times in a semester.
2.	Make-up tests are granted.	2.	Make-up tests need to be requested and are seldom granted.
3.	Test dates can be rescheduled to fit in your schedules.	3.	A valid reason has to be presented and professors approval must be made for reschedule test date.
4.	Review of chapters is done in class before tests.	4.	Revision of chapters is seldom done in class. Students are expected to ask questions or work with a study group if they prefer.

Differences between the Grading System in High School and Post-Secondary

	High School		Post-Secondary
1.	Grading is mostly done based on the assignments given	1.	Grading is more based on the exams and very few based on assignment
2.	There are many chances to raise your grade through extra credit options.	2.	Extra credit options are not used very often.
3.	The first exam grade does not affect the future grades as much as in college.	3.	The first exam is considered as a "wake up" call to let the student know what and how they need to prepare for the up-coming exams.
4.	One can be graduated even with a grade D or higher.	4.	Department requirements at post-secondary institutions are generally averaging of a 2.0 or higher

Other Related Differences between the in High School and Post-Secondary

	High School		Post-Secondary
1.	Eligibility to conduct and participate in extra-curricular activities is determined according to the state/district policy.	1.	The institution determines the eligibility according to its own plans and policies. NCAA/Conference
2.	Financial matters are generally handled by the parents; hence students are dependent on their parents for incidental expenses.	2.	Financial matters are different for each individual. Finding a balance between academic load and job demand is very important.
3.	Priorities are set and guided by the parents or the teachers.	3.	One needs to recognize and set their priorities independently.

[26]

[26] Catch the Wave: A Guide to Postsecondary Education for Students with Disabilities. South Dakota Transition Services Liaison Project.

SELF ADVOCACY & COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Disclosure and Self-Advocacy Skills are paramount to presenting the need for accommodation at the post-secondary level. If a student with disabilities has had to practice self-advocacy skills while still in high school, he or she will be more likely to carry these skills over to college.

What is self advocacy?

- Taking responsibility for your own life
- Knowing your responsibilities
- Knowing your rights
- Making choices
- Asking for help when needed

A student may already know from experience what works best for them. With the help of the disability support office, a student can relay their learning skills to a professor. Self disclosure skills are another important area, which includes timing, plan development, assertive communication, and self-advocacy with adult cooperation. Even though a student may utilize self-advocacy skills, this does not necessarily increase acceptance by the university community. Effective disclosure principles are essential for the student with disabilities. Competent disclosure and advocacy skills require shared information concerning disability-related needs; effective recommendations for accommodations; and coordinated procedures to alleviate making changes when efforts are not working.

Self-advocacy includes the ability to discuss weaknesses as well as strengths. It is the student's responsibility, not the support counselor's, to self-disclose and arrange for accommodations. Anticipating the interpersonal exchanges, when advocating for disability accommodations, allows the student to have a road map. A plan is laid out which leads inexorably to the goal of academic success, whatever obstacle might be thrown in the way.

During a meeting with a professor, effective communication skills are essential. These skills include:

- Expressing thoughts and feelings honestly and directly
- Making eye contact that is firm, but not glaring
- Speaking appropriately in an audible voice
- Using a speech pattern that is clear
- Emphasizing key words
- Using "I" language and not "you" language
- Making appointments to raise issues
- Being aware of non-verbal presentation using body cues and postures (Thierfield, 1985).

Some steps students can take to become a better self-advocate:

- Become aware of your strengths and weaknesses and what helps you learn or perform better
- Be an active member of your education planning team
- Listen carefully
- Make decisions and be responsible
- Learn how to ask for help when it is needed
- Help others
- Learn about available resources
- Understand it's okay to make mistakes and learn from them
- Learn to solve problems effectively
- Finish your education
- Learn strategies to manage the challenges of your disability
- Set personal goals
- Develop a positive attitude, flexibility and a sense of humor

How will we know when students are gaining self-advocacy skills?

- Students will demonstrate skills (or know how to access support) in:
    - Communicating with others
    - Identifying needed accommodations and supports
    - Expressing hopes and wants
    - Relating with people in authority
    - Relating to peers
    - Solving problems
    - Controlling anger
    - Finding out about jobs and careers
    - Finding a job
    - Getting an education or training
    - Taking care of oneself
    - Getting around in the community

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

My experience at Southwest Minnesota State University has been one of the best of my life. I have grown in innumerable ways as a person. In the process, I have found out I could do things I did not think were possible. The most satisfying part for me is the much greater degree of independence I have gained for myself. Prior to attending SMSU, I was almost entirely dependent on those around me. My parents did almost everything for me at home and an aid followed me around to each class. Now, I live my daily life with 90 percent autonomy with the exception of Personal Care Attendants helping me with showering, dressing, and toileting. They usually stop by four times a day; once to get me up and ready in the morning, midmorning for a bathroom break, mid afternoon for a bathroom break, and at bedtime to brush teeth and get put to bed. The PCA situation works out beautifully as long as you are thorough, clear, and kind to them. In terms of relationships with teachers or employers, it is basically the same thing with the PCA's. You must be clear and honest about what your needs are, otherwise they will never get dealt with. This whole process I believe gets started when you are honest with yourself. Every person needs to know what their strengths and weaknesses are, and they must figure out how to best overcome those weaknesses. Although you may have difficulties that are much more readily visible, rest assured that everybody regardless of who they are is trying to deal with their own set of issues. All new workers and students go through an initial period of nervousness at the workplace and school. The entire first week of my college career I was wondering what I was doing here. After I realized I was where I belonged, everything got easier. To use a quote from the movie Legally Blonde, "It is with passion, courage of conviction and strong sense of self that we take our next step into the world." I believe you should trust people until they present you with a reason not to. Finally, you should ALWAYS have confidence in your own abilities.

-Jack Nelson

Growing up, I was very independent; maybe a bit too independent for my own good. I would say my family, friends, and community played a major part in my development of independence. I was always made to feel like just an ordinary kid as much as possible. While I am sure my parents had their fears, they always let me try everything my siblings did even if I struggled. That's probably the most important thing a parent can do for their child disabled or non-disabled, let them struggle to some extent.

When I was in high school, I always knew I would go to college. However, I was not very realistic about what it takes transitioning to life after high school. For instance, when I was a freshman and sophomore I rarely went to Learning Resources, only going when I needed to take tests and to get my notes. I knew that they could help me with a lot more things, but I felt that I should not be "lazy" and take too much help. Then in my junior and senior year, I began to realize it was not about being "lazy" and the help was out there to level the playing field. Therefore, an important part of college life for a student with a disability is recognizing the help that's out there only levels the field not to give you an advantage. I know you're probably like "Yeah, Yeah, Yeah, I'm independent and no matter what the help does, I can handle things without it." I was the same way. Take it from me, taking the help does not mean you're lazy or weak.

Along those same lines, as I was beginning my college career there were all these people who told me that they would be there to assist me whenever I needed it, from my Vocational Rehabilitation counselor to the staff at the Learning Resources, to other individuals. Again, I was like "Yeah right. I'm not going to come to you; I can handle things on my own." Did I find out I was wrong. I found these people are a great resource, and if you remember ultimately, it is your responsibility to make sure everything that needs to be taken care of, is taken care of. There is nothing wrong in using these great resources.

Another example [in looking at experience] of how important it is to be realistic in understanding your abilities and weaknesses is when I was assessed for PCA services. I always dressed and bathed myself so when I was assessed for PCA services I, at first, said I would not need help with those activities. Once I was actually in college, I realized that even though I was able to bathe myself it was safer and faster for me to take a shower, something that I did need assistance with. From this experience I learned I also needed to be realistic about my physical abilities as well. If you are independent in some of your activities of daily living, I cannot stress how important it is being realistic about your abilities, understanding your physical limitations, and knowing when to ask for enough help.

-Chelsie Hermsen

If you put your mind up to something, you can reach it. For me, going to college was never a question. I knew in sixth-grade I was going to college. I knew there were issues, but I was going to find a way. And wow there were issues! There were points; my parents thought it was impossible. I required PCA service for six hours a day to come to college, and I had never even used PCAs before.

Despite this, I remained confident. I visited with my county case manager and applied for a program for PCA services. I visited five universities around Minnesota; eventually deciding on Southwest Minnesota State University in Marshall, Minnesota. For me that was the fun, yet tough part. I was hoping universities could help me with PCA services, and I was way off. Most will only tell you about few providers, if that. This was fearful to me at first. How can I trust a PCA provider? What if I need help in the middle of the night? How will I get into my room? However, I knew to remain confident; giving up is not an answer. As long as the ADA exists and my family supports me, there will be a way.

I was right. Disability services helped me get a door opener for my dorm and talk to a student in a similar situation. Then before I knew it, I moved in. I got into my classes, and I knew everything was okay. After a few months, I realized what I had gone through was not as hard as it seemed. Having PCAs is no big deal after you experience it. People are there to help you if you seek them out. Were there issues to come? Of course, but I can handle it. The biggest issue with transition is confidence. As long as you see something as possible, dreams can be achieved. Nothing is impossible. Transition is to be a celebration of life and nothing to be feared.

-Danny Sedgeman

INFORMATION TO PARENTS

Although many of the steps taken in preparation for post-secondary education must be taken by students themselves, there are several key things that the parent/ guardian can do to help ensure a smooth transition. Transitioning from high school to post-secondary also means transition for the role of parent(s)/guardian. The parent(s)/guardian have to be the support system, rather than being "a helicopter parent (hovering around their children all the time)". It also is time to encourage your child to have self-determination and be independent. Basically understand that independence comes from empowering your child with information and back up support. Depriving your child from making his/her own decisions may hinder development of life skills. Believing that at a certain age, your child can make age appropriate and rational decisions actually improves the child's self image and confidence. Your role is to become your child's support system and it's the best if you let your child be in the driver's seat.

Listed below are strategies for parents/guardians to help their child succeed:

1. Recognize that your son or daughter with a disability will go through the same experiences as their non-disabled peers.
2. Preparation for higher education needs to start early in your son's or daughter's high school years.
3. Ask the high school staff for information regarding appropriate post-secondary choices, such as technical college, community college, or university.
4. Explore the benefits of extending the high school graduation date to take advantage of transition programs.
5. Work with your child's high school teachers and support staff, and community agencies to identify transition activities that will prepare your child for higher education.
6. Contact the admissions office of several colleges or universities. Ask to speak with the service provider for students with disabilities. Talk with the service provider about the admissions process for students with disabilities. Ask how students must document their disability, and what services that institution offers to students with disabilities.
7. Ensure that your child will have the necessary recent testing that a college or university needs to document a disability. This includes, but is not limited to, learning disabilities. This testing can be done during the senior year of high school, but schedule it early. Have these reports and copies of your child's most recent disability assessment, IEP (Individual Education Plan), and transition plan available for college staff.
8. Encourage your child to contact rehabilitation services to determine eligibility for services. Rehabilitation services can help with financial and equipment support for students with disabilities.
9. If your child's chosen college or university requires post-admissions test results, learn the process for requesting testing accommodations. If your child needs testing accommodations, the need must be documented.
10. Ensure that your child learns to use reasonable and appropriate accommodations. These accommodations are determined based on documented need and may include, but are not limited to test taking, note taking, reading texts, and using adaptive technology.
11. Remember your child has the responsibility to notify the college or university that she or he has a disability identifying the needs and provide appropriate documentation of those needs. The college or university provides reasonable accommodation based on documentation of the disability.

HOUSING

When a student with a disability thinks about transitioning from life into living on his or her own, he or she will probably have to face the question on where to live. This may be a major worry of the student's parents and a major source of stress. It might be reassuring to know that with almost everything a person may not be discriminated against in housing practices. Also, there are programs out there for people with disabilities to aid in a variety of issues they may face.

The first thing a person with a disability must know and understand their rights. Under the Fair Housing Act no one may take any of the following acts based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or disability:

- Refuse to rent or sell
- Refuse negotiation for housing
- Set different terms, conditions or privileges for sale or rental
- Provide different housing services or facilities
- Falsely deny that housing is available for inspection, sale, or rental
- Deny anyone access to or membership in a facility or service (such as a multiple listing service) related to the sale or rental

Additionally, if you have a disability, your landlord may not:

- Refuse to let you make reasonable modifications to your dwelling or common use areas, at your expense, if necessary for the disabled person to use the housing.
  (Where reasonable, the landlord may permit changes only if you agree to restore the property to its original condition when you move.)
- Refuse to make reasonable accommodations' in rules, policies, practices or services if necessary for the disabled person to use the housing.

(E.g. A building with a "no pets" policy must allow a visually impaired tenant to keep a guide dog. An apartment complex that offers tenants ample, unassigned parking must honor a request from a mobility-impaired tenant for a reserved space near his or her apartment if necessary to assure that she can have access to his or her apartment.)

Procedures for getting an apartment

- Decide which location you want to live. Look for benefits such as close proximity to work place, school, access to public transportation etc.
- Look for local listings of Rentals in the Classifies Section of Newspaper.
- Call the leasing office and make an appointment for visit.
- It is helpful to take your guardian with you in "apartment hunts."
- Check for accessibility in bathrooms, elevators, type of neighborhood, handicapped parking space, etc. Articulate your needs to the housing representatives.
- If interested ask for application form and fill it out. You may be charged fees for background checks. Get a contract with time period that is reasonable to you. You may have to put down deposits. You may also remind the landlord about the accommodation you need.

1. College is an achievable goal.
2. Entering or re-entering a college is an adjustment for any student.
3. The college wants you to succeed.
4. You are a student with a disability, not a disabled student.
5. A disability, as defined by Americans with Disabilities Act, is a permanent condition which substantially limits one or more major life activities.
6. The college admission application will not ask if you have a disability.
7. Come to orientation.
8. Provide advance notice if you will need accommodations for orientation.
9. You are responsible for contacting the Disability Support Services (DSS) office.
10. You should be prepared to answer questions about your disability and how it affects you in an academic setting.
11. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) does not apply to Colleges and Universities.
12. If you only recently became disabled or learned of your disability, you will need to familiarize yourself with campus and community support resources.
13. You should be familiar with support services you might need close to the college.
14. You should know about the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) office that serves your home area as well as the one serving the area where your college is located.
15. The real challenge is not getting into college, but successfully getting out.
16. Your will need to provide documentation of your disability to the Disability Support Services office.
17. Your documentation should include details about your current limitations and how the disability will affect you in an academic setting.
18. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) limits the information the DSS office can share about you.
19. If you had an Individualized Education Program (IEP) in high school, a copy of the IEP may not be all you need to provide.
20. That you can find examples of guidelines for documenting learning disabilities and that you also can find examples of standards for documenting ADD or ADHD at
    www.ahead.org
    www.ets.org
    www.act.org
21. You should check with the DSS office about guidelines for documentation of other disabling conditions such as psychiatric, vision, hearing, neurological, chronic health conditions, and traumatic brain injuries and acquired brain injuries.
22. Colleges may have different requirements for how recent the information needs to be.
23. Colleges and universities are not required to conduct or pay for an evaluation to document your disability.
24. Your transcripts will not show you received accommodations.
25. You should always keep a copy of the documentation of your disability in your personal files.
26. Accommodations are intended to level the playing field.
27. Determining appropriate accommodations is an interactive process between you, the DSS office, and faculty or other relevant administrators.

28. Students accustomed to special treatment in high school may be surprised by the absence of the same condition on the college campus.
29. You need to be adaptable and flexible.
30. All accommodations are determined in an individual basis.
31. You must disclose your disability to the DSS office to receive accommodations.
32. Accommodations may vary from course to course.
33. Advances in technology are constantly expanding the range of accommodations available to students.
34. If your disability limits your access to printed text, technology now offers solutions that allow you to be more independent.
35. If you need a reader or a scribe, these may be provided for tests or in-class work, but not for routine assignments outside of class or research projects.
36. Accommodations would be considered unreasonable if they fundamentally alter the essential elements of an academic program, curriculum or course, or lower the standards; threaten the health or safety of yourself or others: or cause undue financial hardship for the institution.
37. You cannot be charged a fee for accommodations.
38. There is a difference between accommodations and personal services.
39. Students with disabilities have access to tutors on the same basis as other students.
40. Professional tutors or learning specialist tutors may be available at some colleges.
41. Take advantage of the accommodations and services available.
42. Identify the ADA Coordinators for your institution.
43. Colleges and universities are required to adopt procedures for students to file a disability grievance or complaint.
44. Most colleges and Universities do what is necessary to meet the minimum requirements of the law; many will exceed those requirements focusing instead on the "spirit of the law".
45. The first semester will generally be the toughest for any student.
46. You need to do a reality check when choosing your course of study or major.
47. Some programs have developed technical standards which students must meet.
48. The 3 R's we always heard about are still needed for college work "reading, (w)riting and 'arithmetic'.
49. Choose your program and classes with a realistic understanding of your reading and comprehension levels.
50. You need to balance the requirements of the course with the impact of your disability.
51. You need to know how your disability affects your learning.
52. If you have a learning disability in the area of math, the longer you wait to take math, the less you may remember.
53. Checking out the syllabus for each course may help you decide if this course is right for you this semester.
54. There is no special education in college.
55. You need to do some research before choosing instructors.
56. Some colleges offer priority or early registration to students with certain disabilities.
57. Many DSS offices will provide you with a written document, generally known as an advocacy memo, that spells out the kind of accommodations that they think might work for you.
58. You should check out your classrooms before classes begin.

59. If you have mobility impairments, the classroom needs to be accessible and located in an accessible building.
60. You need to check with the DSS office before the beginning of the semester to discuss any special requirements you may have for your classes.
61. If you have a speech impediment and have difficulty communicating, speak with your professor and develop a plan especially if class discussion and oral presentation are required.
62. Distance learning may provide a good option for students attendance and participation issues.
63. A request for extension of time to complete assignments or programs might be reasonable accommodation in some circumstances.
64. Maintaining an open line of communication with your instructor is good practice.
65. You should ensure a good experience for your service animal and your classmates.
66. If you are having difficulty in a particular course you may want to consider pass/fail and no credit options if available at your institution.
67. Auditing a course is a great way to brainstorm about how to accommodate your particular needs before you take the course for a grade.
68. College life includes more than academics.
69. The experience gained from joining a student organization is priceless.
70. Navigating the campus climate and attitudes can be intimidating for some students with severe and visible disability.
71. You should not expect your college roommate to provide special services for you.
72. You should learn evacuation procedures existing in your campus.
73. Good study skills are very important and can be the key to your academic success.
74. Some colleges offer summer transition programs for college bound freshmen with disability.
75. Behavior and performance counts.
76. There will be at least three hours or more for homework per class hour.
77. You should find a good place on campus to study.
78. If you don't use technology- especially computers- learn as quickly as you can.
79. Knowing your learning style is important.
80. Participating in group study sessions is an excellent way to establish a relationship with classmates.
81. Good communication and self advocacy skills are essentials.
82. Being organized can make a huge difference.
83. You shouldn't be too proud to ask for assistance.
84. Dropping a course does not indicate a failure.
85. If you have problems with a foreign language because of a documented language- based learning disability, you may be allowed to take substitute courses.
86. Finding a mentor can ease your college experience.
87. You need to become familiar with the library and the resources available.
88. You should learn to manage stress, recognize depression, and resolve conflict.
89. You need to work towards independence and self-reliance in as many areas as possible.
90. Not all colleges will be able to meet your needs.
91. Considering transferring to another college or attending graduate school.
92. Students with disability are entitled to the same legal protection in graduate and professional schools.
93. Your disability may make you eligible for accommodations on national entrance exams.

94. You shouldn't wait until you are near graduation to make use of the campus Career Services office.
95. Preparing for employment after graduation, focus on your ability with potential employers, not your disability.
96. Campus work, co-ops, and internships are a must for all students in today's competitive world.
97. You can use your involvement in campus organization to connect to similar groups in the community.
98. Many college campuses offer intramural sports programs that are or can be fully adaptable for participation by students with disabilities.
99. Participation in study abroad programs can make you much more marketable when looking for employment after graduation.
100. It is about ability, not disability!!

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[27] 100 Things Every College Student with a Disability Ought to Know. Kendra D. Johnson. Ed.D and Trudie N. Hines.

MINNESOTA POST-SECONDARY OFFICES OF DISABILITY SERVICES

Offices of disability services are made to serve those with disability. They are made to ensure that students with disabilities obtain the necessary services to become fully independent members of college society as they provide information, advocacy, funding, career assistance, as well as the academic resources.

Four-Year State Universities in Minnesota

Bemidji State University, Bemidji
Zachary Johnson
Director, Advising Success Center
Office for Students with Disabilities, Decker Hall 202
1500 Birchmont Drive, NE #43
Bemidji, MN 56601-2699
Phone: (218) 755-2226
Email: zjohnson@bemidjistate.edu
Sylvia Olney
Advising and Accommodations Coordinator
Office for Students with Disabilities, Decker Hall 202
1500 Birchmont Drive, NE #43
Bemidji, MN 56601-2699
Phone: (218) 755-2539
Email: solney@bemidjistate.edu

Metropolitan State University, St. Paul (Couldn't find information on Metropolitan State University disability services)
Disability Services Office
St. Paul Campus
700 E. Seventh St.
St. Paul MN 55106
Phone: (651) 793-1525, 651-793-1540
TTY: (651) 772-7723
Fax: (651) 793-1547
E-mail: disability.services@metrostate.edu

Minnesota State University, Mankato
Julie Snow MS, LSW
Director, Office of Disability Services
Minnesota State University
132 Memorial Library
Mankato, MN 56001
Phone: (507) 389-2825 (Voice/TTY)
Fax: (507) 389-1199
Email: julie.snow@mnsu.edu

Minnesota State University, Moorhead
Kari Klettke
Director of Accessibility Resources
1104 7th Avenue S Box 12
Moorhead, MN 56563
Phone: (218) 477-4318
MRS/TTY: 1-800-627-3529
Fax: (218) 477-2430
Email: kari.klettke@mnstate.edu

Saint Cloud State University, St. Cloud
Andria Belisle
Director of Student Disability Services
Centennial Hall 202
Saint Cloud State University
720 Fourth Avenue South
Saint Cloud, Minnesota 56301-4498
Phone: (320) 308-4080, (320) 308-3117
Fax: (320) 308-5100
Email: sas@stcloudstate.edu or aebelisle@stcloudstate.edu

Southwest Minnesota State University, Marshall
Disability Resources
1501 State Street, BA 239
Marshall, MN 56258
Phone: (507) 537-6492
Fax: (507) 537-6812
Pam Ekstrom, Director of Disability Resources, Associate Director Academic and Diversity Resources
E-mail: pam.ekstrom@smsu.edu

Winona State University, Winona
Nancy Dumke
Assistant Director for Learning Services / 504 - Coordinator
Disability Resource centre
Maxwell Hall 314
P.O. Box 5838
Winona, MN 55987
Phone: (507) 457-5878,
Fax: (507) 457-2957
Email: ndumke@winona.edu

Two-Year Colleges in Southwestern Minnesota

Minnesota West Community and Technical College, Canby
Rebecca Weber
Dean of Student Services
Phone: 507-223-1332
Email: rebecca.weber@mnwest.edu

Minnesota West Community and Technical College, Granite Falls
Laurel Christianson
Student Services, Student Advisor
Phone: 320-564-5052
Email: laurel.christianson@mnwest.edu

Minnesota West Community and Technical College, Jackson
Kathy Handke
Disability Services Coordinator
Phone: 507-847-7970
Email: kathy.handke@mnwest.edu

Minnesota West Community and Technical College, Pipestone
Lynn VanderPlaats,
Student Services, Student Advisor
Phone: 507-825-6816
Email: lynn.vanderplaats@mnwest.edu

Minnesota West Community and Technical College, Worthington
Jeffery Williamson
College Provost
Phone: 507-372-3408
Email: jeff.williamson@mnwest.edu

Ridgewater College, Willmar
Jay Morrison
Director, Disability Services
2101 15th Avenue NW
Willmar, MN 56201
Phone: (320) 222-5216,
Fax: (320) 222-5216
Email: jaymorrison@ridgewater.edu

The following is a partial list of agencies that serve people with disabilities. These agencies may also provide a variety of services, such as mentioned in other areas of this Transition Manual, like information, advocacy, funding, career assistance and academic assistance. For more information on how agencies can assist students with disabilities, you can contact the Disability Services Office on your campus.

ADA Minnesota
- ◊ Technical assistance on ADA compliance, training for businesses and individuals
  http://www.deed.state.mn.us/rehab/

American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD)
- ◊ https://www.aapd.com/

Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD)
- ◊ Organization of professionals committed to full participation in higher education for individuals with disabilities
  http://www.ahead.org/

Careers
- ◊ Career research and job hunting, includes disability issues
  http://www.careers.org/

Center for Applied Special Technology
- ◊ Information on universal design for learning
  http://www.cast.org/

Cornucopia of Disability Information (CODI)
- ◊ http://codi.tamucc.edu/

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities
- ◊ http://www.c-c-d.org/

Disability Resources, inc.
- ◊ http://www.disabilityresourceinc.com/

The DO-IT Center
- ◊ Offers information to students with disabilities pursuing postsecondary options.
  http://www.washington.edu/doit/

Job Accommodations Network
- ◊ Information on job accommodations, ADA, and employability
  http://janweb.icdi.wvu.edu/

Minnesota Association of Centers for Independent Living
- ◊ Information on independent living
  http://www.macil.org/

Minnesota Department of Human Rights
- ◊ All human rights issues in Minnesota
  http://www.humanrights.state.mn.us/

Minnesota Life College

- ◊ 2-4 year post-secondary life skills training for young adults with learning disabilities
  http://www.mnlifecollege.org/

Minnesota State Council on Disability

- ◊ Information on quality of life and empowerment for individuals with disabilities
  http://www.state.mn.us/portal/mn/jsp/home.do?agency=MSCOD

Minnesota Workforce Centers/Rehabilitation Services

- ◊ Information on rehabilitation services for Minnesotans with disabilities
  http://www.deed.state.mn.us/rehab/

Minnesota Workforce Centers/State Services for the Blind

- ◊ Services for Minnesotans who are blind or visually impaired
  http://www.mnssb.org/

Pacer Center

- ◊ Provides individual assistance, workshops, and resources to families who have questions.
  http://www.pacer.org/index.asp

Para Transit Service

- ◊ Door-through-door public transportation for people with disabilities in Twin Cities area
  http://www.pts.umn.edu/bus/university-paratransit-service

The Post-secondary Education Programs Network

- ◊ Regional centers for issues regarding education and individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing
  http://www.pepnet.org/

Read Please

- ◊ Free downloadable text-to-speech software
  https://readplease.en.softonic.com/

Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic

- ◊ Source for taped textbooks
  http://www.learningally.org/

Social Security Online

- ◊ All social security issues
  http://www.ssa.gov/

Work Support

- ◊ Information, resources and research about work and disability
  http://worksupport.com/ (Link goes to a different site)

Assistive Technology

- ➢ Association for the Advancement of Rehabilitation Technology (RESNA)
  https://www.resna.org/

- ➢ Association for the Development of Information Technology Systems for the Disabled (ASPHI)
  http://www.asphi.it/english/Tecnologie/Ausili.htm (Link goes to a different site)

- ➢ Assistive Technology Industry Association (ATIA)

http://www.atia.org

- Access Technology Lab (ATL)
  http://www.washington.edu/computing/atl/ (Link is for a University of Washington site?)

- The Adaptive Technology Resource Center (ATRC)
  http://www.utoronto.ca/atrc/reference/tech/techgloss.html (Link is for a University of Toronto site?)

- Assistive Technology Training Online Project (ATTO)
  https://www.aahd.us/best-practice/assistive-technology-training-online-project-atto/

- Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST)
  http://www.cast.org

- Center for Electronic Studying
  http://cbss.uoregon.edu/projects/presentprojects.htm (Link doesn't work)

- Closing the Gap
  http://closingthegap.com

- DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internet working & Technology)
  http://www.washington.edu/doit/

- Equal Access to Software and Information (EASI)
  http://www.easi.cc/

- The Faculty Room
  http://www.washington.edu/doit/Faculty
  http://www.washington.edu/doit/Faculty/Resources/Disability/

- HEATH Resource Center (Higher Education and Adult Training for People with Disabilities)
  http://www.heath.gwu.edu

- Information Technology Technical Assistance and Training Center (ITTATC)
  http://www.assistivetech.net (Link goes to a different site)

- LD OnLine's Assistive Technology Resources Guide
  http://www.ldonline.org/indepth/technology/

- Math Resources for People with Disabilities
  http://mathforum.org/social/math.disabled.html

- National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
  http://www.loc.gov/nls

- National Center to Improve Practice
  http://www2.edc.org/NCIP/

- Onion Mountain Technology
  http://www.onionmountaintech.com/assistive.php (Link doesn't work)

- Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic, Inc
  http://www.learningally.org/

- Schwab Learning
  http://www.schwablearning.org

- Southern Connecticut State University Center for Adaptive Technology
  http://southernct.edu/ceat/

- Speak to Write
  https://speakwrite.com/

- Special Education Resources on Internet (SERI)
  http://seriweb.com/tech.htm

- The Office for Civil Rights
  http://www.ed.gov/ocr/transition.html

- US Access Board
  https://www.access-board.gov/

- Woodlake Technologies: Assistive Technology Solution
  http://www.woodlaketechnologies.com/default.asp

- Wrightslaw
  http://www.wrightslaw.com

- Abstracts obtained from LD Online's Finding Help section.
  http://www.ldonline.org/help

- For more information of the Fair Housing Act:
  https://www.justice.gov/crt/fair-housing-act-2

Financial Aid

◊ Academics-You Can do it!
http://www.nasfaa.org/subhomes/doitaffordit/doitcover.html (Link doesn't work)

◊ American Indian College Fund
https://collegefund.org/

◊ Collegeboard- Provides a scholarship search and information on loans
https://www.collegeboard.org/

◊ College View-This website explains the financial aid process, has scholarship search, explain the FAFSA and discuss scholarship frauds
http://www.collegeview.com/financialaid/index.html (Link doesn't work)

◊ Financial Aid for Native American Students
http://www.finaid.org/otheraid/natamind.phtml

◊ Scholarships.com-Search engine
http://www.scholarships.com

◊ Princeton Review-Matches Scholarships to you based on your information.
http://www.princetonreview.com/college/finance/

◊ Students.gov- This is an official website of the US government that provides an online directory for government funded scholarships and grants. Also has a private scholarship search.
https://www.students.org/

◊ Supercollege.com- Provides a scholarship search, information on financial aid and a Q/A Section
http://supercollege.com

No and Low Cost Web Resources

STAR Program (A **S**ystem of **T**echnology to **A**chieve **R**esults)
-Serves MN Residents with disabilities
-Help residents gain access to and acquire AT
-Federally funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration
-Publishes the Directory of Funding Resources for Assistive Technology in Minnesota
-Manual online at: www.starprogram.state.mn.us
-Phone: 800-657-3862 for free copy

PACER Simon Technology Center (Loan software, hardware, and devices)
-AT FINDER, online database – http://www.pacer.org/stc/
-Open to professionals and families of students with disabilities in Minnesota
-Yearly membership fees - $100 for professionals; $50 for families
- Can borrow 3 items for a 4 week loan period – Mail order available
-Contact information: PACER at 800-537-2237 http://www.pacer.org/contactpacer.asp

Goodwill/Easter Seals
-Durable medical equipment
-Walkers, Crutches, Canes, Commodes, etc.
-Loan to consumers for up to 4 months.
-Contact information: 660 37th St NW, Rochester, MN 55901
507-287-8699
http://www.goodwilleasterseals.org/site/PageServer?pagename=serv_other_medequip

TED (Telephone Equipment Distribution Program)
-Adaptive telecommunications equipment
-Long-term loan of equipment
Minnesotans with communication or mobility impairments
Provide consultations to assess need and device training
-Contact Information: TED Program, Cedarwood Plaza, 4104 18th Avenue NW, Rochester, MN 55901-0474, www.tedprogram.org, 507-285-7295, or 800-311-1148

Buy/Sell Used AT
*STAR Technology Exchange (STARTE) https://www.mnstarte.org/home.php
*PACER www.pacer.org
-*Technology for Education
-Rebuilt Laptops Phone: call and ask about rebuilds 651-456-5760 (800-370-0047) or
http://www.tfeinc.com/

Check it out- here are two programs for students that may not have access to computers at home…
Special Kids is a program designed to assist those young people who are frequently absent or are having significant difficulties in the classroom because of chronic illness or other special needs. Through an application process, families can apply for computer equipment at a reduced rate; generally $50.00 for a desktop computer or $100.00 for a laptop computer. The remaining cost of the equipment is covered by grant funds or special donations. Printers will be provided if available at time of purchase. Families will be responsible for obtaining their own internet service provider, as well as software. Adaptive equipment is *not* provided. (Resource for adaptive equipment: the STAR Program, http://www.starprogram.state.mn.us).http://www.mncfs.org/special-kids-program

Comcast rolled out its Internet Essentials program nationwide today, offering low-income families in its service territory $10/month Internet connections and access to $150 computers.
Any family with at least one child who qualifies for the free lunch program at public schools can subscribe to a low-speed (1.5Mbps) Comcast Internet connection for $9.95 a month. Comcast guarantees that it won't raise the price and offers the plan without equipment rental or activation fees. Subscribers also cannot have "an overdue Comcast bill or unreturned equipment," and they can't have had Comcast Internet in the last 90 days. http://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/news/2011/09/comcasts-launches-999-internet-for-low-income-families.ars

MD5M Lions

Multiple District 5M Lions Clubs Sponsor
These Camping Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities

Camp Needlepoint

Designed by the American Diabetes Association, Minnesota Area, Camp Needlepoint and Camp Daypoint give young people with diabetes a chance to:

- Challenge their abilities through everything from swimming and sailing to hiking and horseback riding
- Make unforgettable memories in the outdoors
- Meet friends who share the need for insulin
- **Organization:** http://www.diabetes.org/in-my-community/local-offices/minneapolis-minnesota/
- **Contact:** Becky Martin - Camp Director
- **Phone 1:** 1-763-593-5333 ext. 6596
- **Or** Paula Williams Operating Manager 1-763-593-5333 ext. 4211
- **Phone 2:** 1-888-DIABETES (MN only) ext. 6596
- **Email:**rbarnett@diabetes.org or ADAMN_WI_ND@diabetes.org
- **URL:** http://www.diabetes.org/community/camp
- **Participants Served**

- Program is specific to people with disabilities.
- Age range of participants (8 to 17)

Ventures Travel

Welcome to Ventures Travel, where new friends and new experiences enrich lives!

We believe that everybody deserves friends, fun, a chance to grow and a refreshing break from the routine. That's why we offer unique opportunities for people with disabilities to enjoy resident camp, respite care and supervised travel. At *Ventures Travel*, everybody fits in! Children and adults are encouraged to engage in a wide variety of activities all of which are supervised and adapted to the age and ability of each individual. Camp and respite care also provide parents, relatives and foster parents who care for children and adults with disabilities a much-needed break, along with the peace of mind to enjoy it. *Ventures Travel* participants look forward to coming back year after year. For some, the year is split between recalling memories from the last visit and looking forward to the next.

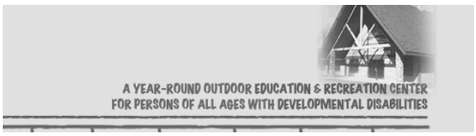
952-852-0107, or 866-692-7400, or by **email** at vt@venturestravel.org, or the **website**: www.venturestravel.org

Camp Confidence

- To provide a unique year-round opportunity, facility and professional staff for persons with developmental disabilities.
- To provide opportunities with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community for language and cultural expansion, support and education.
- To enhance the ability and self-confidence of people of all ages with developmental disabilities, with particular emphasis on persons with mental retardation, wherever they may be.
- To educate through "hands-on" outdoor and recreation experiences while meeting individual needs.
- To facilitate exceptional learning experiences for families, direct care staff, interns, and professionals in the field of developmental disabilities.

Confidence Learning Center is different as our Campers come to Confidence Learning Center WITH their primary care provider - they are not BROUGHT. We feel this provides a great learning and growing opportunity for everyone!

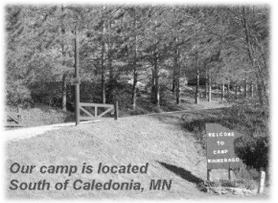
Confidence Learning Center
1620 Mary Fawcett Memorial Drive
East Gull Lake, MN 56401
Phone: 218-828-2344



Camp Winnebago

Camp Winnebago is a non-profit organization dedicated to serving the recreational needs of adults and children with developmental disabilities.

Individuals with developmental disabilities, six years of age and older, are eligible to attend Camp Winnebago.

SUMMER SESSIONS *A variety of traditional summer camp activities abound: swimming, cooking over a fire, games, arts and crafts, dancing and more. Activities are adapted to the age and ability each camper.*

Barbara Cage, Executive Director
19708 Camp Winnebago Road Caledonia, MN 55921
PH 507-724-2351
FAX 507-724-3786