



TOPIC: IEP Team Considerations-Graduation-Related Topics

*“What special factors should the IEP Team consider while preparing a student for graduation?”*

### **Develop thorough transition plans**

Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the student turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate, the student’s IEP must address education and training, employment, and independent living (where appropriate). These postsecondary goals must be based on age-appropriate transition assessments and provide for interagency linkages. The student’s transition plan should document how the postsecondary goals are supported by transition services and annual goals and should be updated annually (92 NAC 51-007.07A9).

### **Consider graduation requirements and IEP annual goals**

Neither Rule 51 nor IDEA includes a requirement that an IEP contain specifically identified graduation criteria or a graduation plan; however, it is recognized that many districts document the graduation requirements in the student’s IEP. Deciding to document discussions about the student’s graduation plans either in the IEP or in IEP meeting notes may assist the IEP Team with documenting meaningful opportunities the parent was offered during the development, review, or revision of their child's IEP.

State law--not the IDEA--dictates the substantive standards for graduation. 92 NAC Rule 10-003.05 provides graduation requirements for each NE high school from grades nine through twelve. Additionally, Neb. Rev. Stat. §79-729 states that the graduation requirements prescribed in the statute do not apply to high school students whose individualized education plans prescribe a different course of instruction. Therefore, the IEP Team is responsible for determining the student’s course of instruction; considering the district’s graduation requirements and the student’s progress on meeting annual goals.

### **Provide the Parent with Notice**

Graduation from high school with a regular diploma constitutes a change of placement; therefore, pursuant to 92 NAC 51-004.03A2 a school district or approved cooperative must provide the parent with notice consistent with 92 NAC 51-009.05.

### **Provide the Student with a Summary of Performance**

A school district or approved cooperative shall provide a student with a summary of the student's academic achievement and functional performance, which shall include recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting the student's postsecondary goals (92 NAC 51-006.06E1). The Summary of Performance must be provided to a student whose eligibility for special education is terminated due to:

1. graduating from a secondary school with a regular high school diploma; or
2. exceeding the age of eligibility for a free appropriate public education.

### **"Social Graduation"**

In accordance with Neb. Rev. Stat. §79-770, at the request of the parent, a school district shall allow a student who is receiving special education and has not completed an IEP, the opportunity to participate in a graduation ceremony with his or her peers. During this graduation ceremony the student will be given a certificate of attendance. The student's participation in the graduation ceremony and the receipt of a certificate of attendance does not affect a school district's obligation to continue to provide special education.

For more information about these topics visit <http://ndetransition.site.esu9.org/announcements/>