

Walpole Public School  
Postsecondary Education  
Resource Guide

August 2011

## Overview

This guide highlights postsecondary education topics and provides resources for students and their families. Many of the resources presented in this guide are from the Massachusetts FOCUS Academy Promoting Postsecondary Education Options for Students with Disabilities Course. The topics presented in this guide can be researched through the websites provided and used as discussion points for your family.

There is a range of postsecondary education opportunities available to students. Through transition planning, students with disabilities, their families, school personnel, adult service representatives, and interested others work in partnership to use backwards design to support the student's vision. By involving students in the transition process, they better understand the options for their future as well as develop an awareness of the accommodations they will need. When students have the opportunity to attend their IEP meeting to learn about their disability and needed accommodations, they are better able to self-advocate for success in his/her future. Through teaching the self-determination skills of goal setting, problem-solving, self-knowledge, choice-making, decision-making, self-advocacy and leadership, students find their own voice. Students need to make choices as well as decisions about their futures; and through self-advocacy the student is able to express his or her preferences. A student's voice is critical in the transition process.

As a student prepares for studies at the postsecondary education level, they need to recognize and express their strengths and needs. It is a student's decision to disclose their disability and personal challenges at the postsecondary education level. They may share all or part of their Individual Education Plan from high school and/or evaluations/assessments. When students are aware of their learning styles, they are enabled to speak out for their beliefs, needs, and cultural values. The greatest change from high school to the postsecondary education level is the shift in responsibility from parents to the students. Navigating the transition process to postsecondary education for students includes development of self-advocacy skills, self-awareness, self-determination, understanding their rights as well as individual learning style, self-knowledge, interpersonal skills, and independence.

This guide provides resources to assist students and their family with the postsecondary education process. The document is a work in progress and will be updated as additional information is made available.

Taken with permission from Paula Nargi Black of the Newton Public Schools/

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## **Rationale**

Students need to become as independent as possible during their high school years so that they will have a greater range of possibilities available to them post high school. Many times the team provides too many support systems enabling the student to depend upon modifications without gaining independence. Although there are a number of supports provided at the postsecondary level, one thing is clear; students must know how to self-advocate. By backwards planning, focusing on the student's vision, the team can work toward the student's independence, thus opening more opportunities to students.

As a student plans for the postsecondary level, they should incorporate the following:

- Person centered planning is a process that can support a student through identifying and developing goals for their future.
- Visit colleges and ask about disability services. Know what is available at the postsecondary level, which will help in planning for accommodations in high school.
- Know the admissions process (testing requirements, applications, etc).
- Decide if you, the student, want to disclose your disability. If a student wants to receive accommodations they will need to disclose.
- Collect documentation for the college if the student is planning on disclosing their disability and wants to receive disability services.

## **Youth leadership and self-advocacy**

To enable youth to become decision makers and leaders skills should be developed in self-determination, self-awareness, understanding rights and responsibilities, self-advocacy and ability-awareness. Youth will have a new set of challenges at the postsecondary level. They will make their own decisions about their future goals and will need to self-advocate for services as well as accommodations. Parents will not be able to step in to make phone calls; select classes and arrange services. Youth need to act on their own behalf as they face new independence as well as social opportunities.

Students should prepare for the postsecondary level while in high school by:

- Requesting student centered IEP meetings
- Actively participating in their IEP meeting
- Being aware of their disabilities and needed accommodations
- Making their needs and preferences know
- Reflecting on the effectiveness of services in high school so to be in alignment with the reasonable accommodations that will be offered under ADA at the postsecondary level
- Choice-making, decision-making, self-scheduling, goal setting, self-initiative
- Self-advocating
- Taking risks with reflection
- Participating in real-life experiences in high school
- Developing interpersonal problem-solving strategies, good communication, and social skills
- Moving towards more inclusive settings
- Understanding legal rights

### **Resources:**

National Center on Secondary Education and Transition  
Institute on Community Integration (UCEDD)  
6 Pattee Hall, 150 Pillsbury Drive SE  
Minneapolis, MN 55455  
612-624-2097  
[www.ncset.org](http://www.ncset.org)

The Rehabilitation Research and Training Center  
[www.rrtc.hawaii.edu](http://www.rrtc.hawaii.edu)

## **Planning**

Planning for postsecondary education should start while a student is in high school. A student should work in collaboration with the school counselor or transition specialist as well as their parent(s) to explore options and develop a transition plan.

### **Going to College**

Going to College is a resource for teens with disabilities. This website provides information on planning for college, campus life and my place. Students can use this website to organize their own portfolio. In addition, the website provides a series of workshops that students can download ranging from accepting my disability to knowing the law worksheets.

[www.going-to-college.org/index.html](http://www.going-to-college.org/index.html)

Portfolio

[www.going-to-college.org/portfolio!index.html](http://www.going-to-college.org/portfolio!index.html)

### **Person-Centered Planning**

Person-centered planning is a process of empowering individuals with disabilities to identify and develop goals for their future. A facilitator works with parents, teachers, family members and friends who are invited guests by the individual with a disability to assist that person in establishing a plan in keeping with the person's vision to achieve their personal goals. Through this approach, the individual is provided with an opportunity to brainstorm likes and dislikes as well as to develop an action plan in the areas of work, social relationships, living and leisure.

#### **Resources:**

[www.ilr.cornell.edu/ped/tsal/pcp/](http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/ped/tsal/pcp/)

[www.ncset.org?publications/viewdesc.asp?id=1431](http://www.ncset.org?publications/viewdesc.asp?id=1431)

PEATC

[www.peatc.org/NEXT STEPS/Intro!brief.htm](http://www.peatc.org/NEXT_STEPS/Intro!brief.htm)

IMP ACT: Transition to Empowered Lifestyles Project Person-Centered Planning

[www.ptimpact.com](http://www.ptimpact.com)

## Financial Aid

### **Types of Financial Aid**

- Grants** An award that does not have to be paid back.
- Loans** Money that is borrowed to cover educational and related expenses that will be paid back, usually with interest, after the student has left school
- Work-study** Students are employed and earn a portion of school costs while enrolled in school.
- Scholarships** Awards based on a specified criterion such as academic achievement, family history, or other criteria.

### **U.S. Department of Education, Federal Student Aid (FSA)**

<http://ifap.ed.gov/FSACounselors/about.html>

### **Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance**

"The mission of the Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance is to promote and enhance access to higher education by delivering quality student financial aid information and services to residents to the commonwealth, and thus ensuring that they have an opportunity to enrich their lives and contribute to the economic development and social process of the state."

[www.osfa.mass.edu/default.asp?page=aidPrograms](http://www.osfa.mass.edu/default.asp?page=aidPrograms)

### **Applying for Financial Aid (Information from the Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance)**

The first step in applying for financial aid is to complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). You may obtain a FAFSA from a high school guidance office; local library; your College's financial aid office, or you can call the Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance at 617-727-9420. You can also file your FAFSA electronically. Make sure the FAFSA lists the correct academic year for which you are applying for aid.

Secondly, you should contact the financial aid offices at all institutions you are considering in order to request information on each school's financial aid programs and application procedures. For example, many schools require student to complete the CSS/PROFILE in addition to filing a FAFSA. Go to the Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance to get the PROFILE application.

Third, make sure you review all deadlines as program requirements may vary. Forward all the necessary materials by the specified dates. Keep in mind that many deadlines are receipt dates, not postmark dates.

Fourth, follow-up on any forms you submit if you do not receive a response within a reasonable time frame. Keep copies of all forms you submit for your records!

There are also private and/or community sources of assistance. Research what types of assistance is available to you. To begin, you may want to speak with you high school guidance office. You must reapply for financial aid each year.

### State Resources for Students with Disabilities

#### **State Vocational Rehabilitation Office- Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission**

- Individual must qualify for services
- Impact of education and potential for employment is considered
- Services may include tuition, room and board, transportation, supplies, some accommodations and devices

[www.mass.gov/mrc](http://www.mass.gov/mrc)

#### **Massachusetts Commission for the Blind**

- Offers services similar to MRC for individuals with vision impairments

[www.mass.gov/](http://www.mass.gov/)

#### **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)**

- A federal program that provides assistance for individuals who are aged or have disabilities
- This can be affected by outside income, including work-study
- Plan for Achieving Self Support (PASS) is a way to set aside income and resources to pay for tuition, supplies, transportation, etc., while continuing to receive SSI payments

[www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

#### **Social Security Benefits (SSDI)**

- Individuals may be eligible to receive SSDI due to their or a parents disability (if they are a dependent)

[www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

#### **Private grants and scholarships**

A public library or internet search can be a good resource for this type of financial assistance.

<http://foundationcenter.org>

#### **Americorps**

Americorps offers financial assistance for students in exchange for approved community services.

[www.americorps.org](http://www.americorps.org)

#### **Trio Programs**

Trio programs were established by congress. Funded under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, the Trio program consists of 7 programs designed to assist low

income Americans enter and complete college programs. While Trio may not offer financial assistance, it offers services to help overcome class, social, and cultural barriers. [www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio)

## **Community Mapping**

### **Community Mapping**

Community mapping is a tool used in transition planning to assist students in learning about their community resources. Through community mapping, resources can be identified, access to resources insured, partnerships can be developed, across agencies . support can be created, and collaboration established.

### **Resources:**

#### **Community Youth Mapping**

Center for Youth Development and Policy Research

[www.communityyouthmapping.org](http://www.communityyouthmapping.org)

#### **Community Resource Mapping:**

A Strategy for Promoting Successful Transition for Youth with Disabilities

National Center on Secondary Education and Transition

<http://www.ncset.org/publications/viewdesc.asp?id=939>

## Post Secondary Education options/models

### Types of Postsecondary Education Institutions

Information taken from: [www.ccdanet.org](http://www.ccdanet.org)

**College** An institution that offers educational instruction beyond the high school level in a 2 year or 4 year program.

**University** An academic organization that grants undergraduate and graduate degrees in a variety of fields. It is composed of a number of schools or colleges each of which encompasses a general field of study.

**Liberal Arts College** Four year institution that emphasizes program of broad undergraduate education.

**Junior College** Two year institution of higher learning that provides vocational training and academic curricula.

**Community College** Two year public institution offering similar programs as junior colleges.

**Engineering or Technological College** Independent professional schools that provide 4 year training programs in the fields of engineering and physical sciences. They are often known as Institutes of Technology or Polytechnic Institutes.

**Technical School** A 2 year institution that offers several occupational programs intended to prepare students for immediate employment in fields related to engineering and physical sciences. These schools may also offer a 1 year certificate in certain crafts and clerical skills.

**Nursing School** There are different kinds of nursing schools. At schools affiliated with 4 year colleges, students receive both a Bachelor of Science Degree and an R.N. and have the possibility of entering the field on nursing administration. At a community college, students receive an Associate of Applied Science Degree and an R.N.

**Military Schools** Federal military academies prepare officers for the Army, Navy, and Air Force. These institutions (West Point, Annapolis; the Air Force Academy) require recommendation and appointment by members of Congress. Private and state supported military institutes, however, operate on a college application basis

**Business School** Business schools fall into two categories. At some colleges it is possible to specialize in business administration or in a 2 year secretarial course in conjunction with liberal arts courses and earn an Associate in Applied Science Degree.

## **Postsecondary Options for Students with Disabilities**

- 2 year college for students with specific disabilities only
- Special, separate programs only for students with disabilities housed within a 2 or 4 year college
- 2 or 4 year college or university with individualized supports provided for Students

### **2 Year College for Students with Specific Disabilities Only**

#### **For example: Landmark College**

[www.landmark.edu](http://www.landmark.edu)

- Program is designed to meet the need of students who have learning disabilities and/or ADHD
- Associates degree in General Studies, Business Studies, Business Administration, Liberal Arts
- Supplemental instruction, coaching services and coursework-support center are available

### **Separate Programs within a 2 or 4 year college**

#### **For example: Middlesex Community College- Transitions Program**

[www.middlesex.mass.edu/DisabilitySupport/](http://www.middlesex.mass.edu/DisabilitySupport/)

- Designed for students with significant learning disabilities
- Two year certificate program
- Teaches consumer and business skills, independent living, and personal and social development
- No access to typical college courses
- Reading, math, and written language skills at the fifth to eighth grade level
- Internship each semester in local business settings

### **Substantially Separate Programs**

- Sometimes referred to as a "life skills" or "transition" programs
- Based on college campus or community locations
- No sustained interaction with general student body
- No standard college courses
- Primarily functional curriculum
- May be vocational experience component

### **Inclusive Individual Support Model**

#### **For example: Holyoke Community College**

[www.hcc.edu/campus/carservdis.html](http://www.hcc.edu/campus/carservdis.html)\*\*\*\*\*

- Pilot program participating in the Massachusetts Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment
- Student centered planning drives course selection
- Uses educational coaches for support in transportation, navigating the campus,

time management, social skill

- Individualized services (education coach, assistive technology).
- No segregated classes
- Based on student choice and preference
- Encourages participation in nonacademic campus activities
- May incorporate internship or apprenticeship experience

### **Mixed program**

**For example: Cape Cod Community College- Project Forward**

[www.projectforward.net/index.htm](http://www.projectforward.net/index.htm)

- Students with significant intellectual disabilities
- First year- exploratory career assessment in four areas (basic food preparation, institutional maintenance and landscaping, informational technology and basic retail)
- Second/third years- students participate in a cooperative work/study program and concentrate on one of the following: basic food preparation, institutional maintenance and landscaping, retail/informational technology, mass communications, animal care and child care.
- Opportunity to take general elective courses
- Housed on college campus
- Some interactions with general college population through on-campus club activities, sporting events, etc
- Access to some typical college courses

### **Resources:**

#### **Higher Education Programs**

[www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/opelbep.html](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/opelbep.html)\*\*\*

#### **On Campus Outreach**

[www.education.umd.edu/oco](http://www.education.umd.edu/oco)

#### **STEPS Forward- Inclusive Post Secondary Society**

[www.STEPS-Forward.org](http://www.STEPS-Forward.org)

#### **The US Department of Education's Office of Postsecondary Education**

[www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/index?src=oc](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/index?src=oc)\*\*\*\*

#### **Think College**

[www.thinkcollege.net/identifyprograms](http://www.thinkcollege.net/identifyprograms)\*\*\*\*

#### **Transition to College**

[www.transitiontocollege.net](http://www.transitiontocollege.net)

#### **Transition Coalition**

Mission: Providing online information, support and professional development on topics related to the transition from school to adult life for youth with disabilities.

[www.transitioncoalition.org](http://www.transitioncoalition.org)

## Application procedure options

### Documentation to collect 2 years before planning to attend postsecondary education:

- Statement of disability- most recent evaluation
- Description of treatment, medications, use of assistive devices and services
- History of accommodations

### Documentation needed when applying to colleges:

- Visit the CollegeBoard website to gather information and register for the PSAT and SAT
- Research colleges for a good match
- Visit college and the Disability Services Office
- Gather appropriate information
- Record admission deadlines
- Request letters of recommendation from teachers/adults
- Investigate Financial Aid Options
- Write essay, if required
- Apply to the college directly or use the Common Application. The Common Application has been developed by a group of colleges and universities that accept this application in place of their own application. [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)
- Check with college to make sure application is complete

### Heath Source Center - College Application Process

Online Clearinghouse on Postsecondary Education for Individuals with Disabilities  
[www.heath.gwu.edu](http://www.heath.gwu.edu)

### CollegeBoard

The CollegeBoard website provides many resources beyond just registering for the PSAT and SAT. The CollegeBoard website recommends the following areas to consider when selecting a college; size of the student body, location, academic programs, campus life, costs, diversity, retention and graduation rates.

<http://www.collegeboard.com>

### ACT

The ACT test assesses high school students' general educational development and their ability to complete do college-level work.

[www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)

### Postsecondary Innovative Transition Technology

The Post-ITT website is a collection of resources and activities to help students, parents and educators plan for transition from secondary to postsecondary schools.

[www.postitt.org](http://www.postitt.org)\*\*\*\*

### Community Colleges

American Association of Community Colleges- [www.aacc.nche.edu](http://www.aacc.nche.edu)

The League for Innovation in the Community College - [www.league.org](http://www.league.org)

## **Disability services at the postsecondary level Inclusive College Opportunities**

The range of support services for individuals with disabilities span from a formal contact person with limited services to having a full-time program director with a range of accommodations, trained specialist and individualized support plans. FERP A laws protect the confidentiality of information concerning disabilities.

The following documentation could be required for Disability Services depending upon the disability and postsecondary institution:

- Documentation to verify eligibility for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
- Determination of accommodation is on an individual basis
- Testing must be current
- Testing must identify the disability with specific evidence
- Documentation should address the impact of the disability on an individual's functioning within the context of an academic or vocation environment
- Documentation must be submitted by a qualified practitioner
- Specific recommendations for accommodation must be included

### **Questions to ask when you visit postsecondary programs**

- What type of support is available?
- Is there a mentor, counselor, support person available?
- What accommodations are available?
- Is there tutoring available?
- How accepting is the faculty with making accommodations?
- Are courses in study skills and writing skills available?
- What are the social opportunities?

### **Disability Services**

Below is a list of disability services that may be available at the postsecondary level. The role of the office is to help to ensure that all students have equal access with reasonable accommodations. Disability Support Services determine eligibility, assess service needs, document decision, provide orientation and provide service. Check with the Disability Services department at each of the colleges that you are interested in to identify available services as well as services that you may qualify for under your disability and needs.

- Advocacy and study groups
- Alternative learning and testing conditions
- Developmental courses: reading, writing, math
- Disability specialist
- Lab support in reading and writing, math and science
- Mentors
- Peer tutors
- Specialized advising
- Workshops on issues of disability

## Accommodations

- Accessible elevators
- Accessible parking
- Adaptive computer equipment
- Alphasmart
- Braille
- Breaks during class
- Building access
- Captions/Subtitles
- CART- Communication Access Real-time Transcription
- Classroom note takers
- Extended time
- FM Listening Systems
- Interpreters
- Notes from instructor
- Note taker
- Oral examinations
- Recorded books
- Reduced course loads or full time status for health insurance purposes
- Screen magnification software
- Scribe
- Sign language interpreters
- Tape recorders
- Textbooks on audio tape
- Universally accessible classrooms
- Voice recognition software

## Resources:

Learning Styles

Below are websites to assist with study tips.

[www.metamath.com/multiple/multiple-choice-questions.html](http://www.metamath.com/multiple/multiple-choice-questions.html)\*\*\*\*\*

[www.vark-learn.com/english/index.asp](http://www.vark-learn.com/english/index.asp)\*\*\*\*\*

[www.ldanatl.org](http://www.ldanatl.org) Learning Disabilities Association of America

[www.nclld.org](http://www.nclld.org) National Center on Learning Disabilities

[www.ldonline.org](http://www.ldonline.org) Learning Disabilities Online

[www.ldresources.com](http://www.ldresources.com) Resources for the Learning Disability Community

## Technology

There is a range of technology that can assist individual with disabilities from screen reading software and alternative keyboards to screen enlargers and speech recognition software. The Assistive Technology Act of 1988 refers to "any item, piece of equipment, or product that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individual with disabilities,"

### Assistive Technology

Listing from the Middlesex Community College website

[www.middlesex.mass.edu/DisabilityServices/assistive technology.htm](http://www.middlesex.mass.edu/DisabilityServices/assistive%20technology.htm)\*\*\*\*\*

Commonly-used software and equipment:

- **Zoom Text:** Enlarges information on the computer screen for sight-impaired students
- **Jaws:** Screen reader software that speaks to a student who cannot see the information
- **Naturally Speaking/Dragon Dictate:** Speech recognition software that allows the student to dictate to the computer instead of typing
- **Kurzeil3000:** Screen reader software that highlights text as it reads. Assists student who have language processing learning disabilities in reading
- **Read and Write Gold:** Software available in Disability department and some academic departments that combines screen reader and speech recognition software
- **Adjustable tables/desks:** For students who use wheelchairs or other mobility related equipment
- **CCTV:** Used to enlarge material for students with visual disabilities
- **Personal amplification system:** Used by students who are hard of hearing to amplify instructor's voice
- **Carbonless notebooks**
- **Tape recorders**

### ABLEDATA

8630 Fenton Street, Suite 930

Silver Spring, MD 20910

Phone: 1-800-227-0216

Website: [www.abledata.com](http://www.abledata.com)

ABLEDATA provides objective information about assistive technology products and rehabilitation equipment available from domestic and international sources

### Assistive Technology

DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology)

University of Washington

Box 355670

Seattle, WA 98195

206-685-3648

<http://www.washington.edu/doiit>

### **Assistive Technology Exchange in New England**

The goal of the Assistive Technology Exchange in New England is to put AT equipment that is not currently being used into the hands of someone who can benefit from it.

[www.getatstuff.com/](http://www.getatstuff.com/)

### **MassMatch**

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission

27 Wormwood Street

Boston, MA 02212-1616

Phone: 1-866-682-9955

617-204-3851

[www.massmatch.org/](http://www.massmatch.org/)

Mass MATCH is the Commonwealth's initiative to Maximize Assistive Technology (AT) in Consumer's Hands.

### **The Family Center on Technology and Disability**

The FCTD website is a source full of assistive/instruction technology resources of interest to families of children with disabilities

[www.fctd.info](http://www.fctd.info)

### **The Massachusetts Assistive Technology Loan Program: An Alternative Financing Project**

The Massachusetts Assistive Technology Loan Program, operated by Easter Seals of Massachusetts, is an alternative financing project that gives people with disabilities and elders access to low interest cash loans to purchase assistive devices and services.

Website: [www.massatloan.org](http://www.massatloan.org)

### **Colleges that Provide Disability Services**

Use the following websites to locate colleges that provide disability services:

#### **LD Resources**

[www.Idresources.org/category/8/](http://www.Idresources.org/category/8/)\*\*\*\*

#### **Disabled-World**

[www.disabled-world.com](http://www.disabled-world.com)

#### **New Mobility: The magazine for active wheelchair users**

[www.newmobility.com/articleViewIE.cfm?id=122](http://www.newmobility.com/articleViewIE.cfm?id=122)

#### **Colleges with Programs for Learning Disabled Students**

[www.college-scholarships.com/learning\\_disabilities.htm](http://www.college-scholarships.com/learning_disabilities.htm)\*\*\*\*\*

## **US Colleges Search**

[www.uscollegesearch.org/education-of-the-specific-learning-disab\\*\\*\\*\\*\\*](http://www.uscollegesearch.org/education-of-the-specific-learning-disab*****)

### **Beacon College**

105 East Main Street  
Leesburg, FL  
352-787-7660

Beacon College is the only accredited college offering AA and BA degrees exclusively for students with language based learning disabilities, ADD/ADHD, or LD gifted.

<http://www.beaconcollege.edu>

### **Curry College**

1071 Blue Hill Avenue  
Milton, MA 02186  
617-333-0500

Curry College is a private, four-year, liberal arts-based institution that takes a personalized approach to education.

<http://www.curry.edu/pal/index.htm>

### **Dean College**

99 Main Street  
Franklin, MA 02038  
1-877-TRY-DEAN

Dean College is a private residential college that helps students find their confidence and their success through a unique program geared to individual learning styles.

[www.dean.edu](http://www.dean.edu)

### **Fitchburg State**

The primary objective of Disability Services at Fitchburg State is to empower qualified students with disabilities to engage in all facets of Fitchburg State College's academic, residential and student life.

160 Pearl Street  
Fitchburg, MA 01420  
978-345-2151

### **Landmark College**

PO Box River Road South  
Putney, Vermont 05346  
802-387-6718

Landmark College is one of the only accredited colleges in the United States designed exclusively for students with dyslexia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (AD/HD), or other specific learning disabilities.

<http://www.landmarkcollege.org>

### **MassBay Community College**

The Academic Achievement Center (AAC) on the Wellesley Hills and Framingham

campuses offers professional and peer tutoring in reading/study skills, writing, all levels of mathematics, the sciences, and many other subject areas with the goal of helping students achieve academic success.

Framingham & Wellesley Hills

[www.massbay.edu](http://www.massbay.edu)

### **Thames Academy, Mitchell College**

437 Pequot Avenue

New London, CT 06320

800-443-2811

Thames Academy is a post-grad or pre-college transitional experience. It is a year of academic preparation that students take between the end of their secondary school/high school education and the start of their college studies. Thames Academy at Mitchell provides college level courses for credit.

### **College Support Program**

#### **College Internship Program**

18 Park Street

Lee, MA 01238

1-877-Know-CIP

The College Internship Program at the Berkshire Center provides individualized postsecondary academic, internship and independent living experiences for young adults with Asperger's Syndrome and other Learning Differences.

### **Non-degree Program**

#### **Threshold Program, Lesley University**

29 Everett Street

Cambridge, MA 02138

617-349-8181

The Threshold Program is a comprehensive, non-degree campus-based program at Lesley University for highly motivated young adults with diverse learning disabilities and other special needs.

[http://www.lesley.edu/threshold/threshold\\_home.htm](http://www.lesley.edu/threshold/threshold_home.htm)

## **Interagency planning/teaming**

Through interagency teaming, stakeholders work together to support the individual who has a disability to achieve their vision.

The following information has been taken from "Essential Tools Interagency Transition Team Development and Facilitation" (Center on Disability Service, University of Hawaii at Manoa).

### **Interagency teams serve varied purposes. These are to:**

- Identify local needs or discontinuity in policies, procedures, services, and programs that hinder youth with disabilities from achieving desired, valued outcomes;
- Increase the availability, access, and quality of interagency transition services through the development and improvement of policies, procedures, systems, funding, and other mechanisms for providing seamless transition services to youth with disabilities and their families;
- Help other service representatives understand the educational service system including laws, regulations, and policies related to transition service; roles and responsibilities of families and district personnel; roles of local or regional interagency planning teams; and roles now expected of other service agencies involved in the transition process; and
- Enable youth with disabilities to live, work, and continue to learn in the community, with supports if necessary, as adults.

### **The 9 Principles of Teaming**

1. A team reflects and demonstrates a shared vision.
2. A team promotes empowerment of all members.
3. A team demonstrates shared decision making.
4. A team demonstrates synergy- the whole is more than the sum of its parts.
5. A team highly regards diversity within the team.
6. A team fosters the full inclusion and participation of people impacted by its actions.
7. A team facilitates the self determination and personal growth of itself and members.
8. A team is responsive to its authentic (ecological) context.
9. A team reflects and demonstrates a dynamic and fluid quality.

## 688 Referral

A 688 Referral is filed to determine eligibility for adult services. The referral for adult services should be completed two years before the student plans to graduate or leave school (turns 22) and documents a need for services. The 688 referral forms is attached to the student's current IEP and assessment and sent to a specific agency or to the Bureau of Transitional services. Services are determined by that agency and are tied to state legislature and appropriated funds. Only one 688 referral can be sent to the Bureau of Transitional Services.

### **Eligibility:**

- Receives services in accordance with an IEP  
Receives SSI/SSDI
- On registry at Mass Commission for the Blind
- Unable to work more than 20 hours in competitive, non-sheltered work, non-supported employment at the time they are ready to leave school
- Students on IEPs who receives services from the Department of Youth Services (DYS) or the Department of Social Services (DSS) and receive services through an IEP or 504 plan.

### **Individual Transition Plan (ITP)**

The Individual Transition Plan (ITP) is developed at a meeting coordinated by the Transitional Agency and includes the student, family members, school personnel and other individuals who know the student well. The ITP includes the interests, skills and needs of the person and does not contain specific goals, objectives, or identify specific provider agencies. Supports identified in the IEP are not guaranteed: they are subject to appropriation and availability. An ITP meeting is usually held about one year before the student is ready to leave school and focuses on living situation as well as day/vocational and ancillary supports.

### **Bureau of Transitional Planning (BTP)**

The Bureau of Transitional Planning is responsible for the administration of Chapter 688. The BTP provides information and technical assistance to schools, agencies, families and advocacy groups.

Bureau of Transitional Planning  
One Ashburton Place, Room 1109  
Boston, MA 021 08  
Phone: 617-573-1600

## **Agencies**

### **Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC)**

320 Washington Street

Brookline, MA 02445

Voice/TTY 617-739-9080

Website: [www.mass.gov/mrc](http://www.mass.gov/mrc)      [www.state.ma.us/mtc/](http://www.state.ma.us/mtc/)\*\*\*\*\*

Services are provided to eligible individuals who have a disability that is a barrier to employment and can benefit from services. The following services are provided to lead to competitive employment:

#### **Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

- Vocational counseling
- Job training
- Job placement
- Post-secondary education
- Job coaching service

#### **Community Services Division- providing transition from high school to the adult services world**

- Independent living program
- Networking with independent living services
- Statewide head injury program
- Supportive employment program
- Home care services

#### **Disability Determination Services**

- Benefits planning

### **Department of Developmental Services (DDS)**

Newton/South Norfolk Department Area Office

125 West Street

Walpole, MA 02081

Phone: 508-668-3679

Website: [www.mass.gov/dmr](http://www.mass.gov/dmr)

A person will receive an "eligible" determination letter by DDS and if found ineligible, you can request an information conference/appeal within 30 day of receiving the letter. The request should be in writing to Regional Director, Instructions accompany the determination letter.

#### **Mission Statement**

DDS is dedicated to creating, in partnership with others, innovative and genuine opportunities for individuals with mental retardation to participate fully and meaningfully in, and contribute to, their communities as valued members.

#### **As defined by the Department of Developmental Services:**

**Mental Retardation:** means significantly sub-average intellectual functioning existing concurrently and related to significant limitations in adaptive functioning. Mental

retardation manifests before age 18.

**Significantly Sub Average Intellectual Functioning:** means an intelligence test score of 70 or below, as determined from the findings of assessments using valid and comprehensive, individual measures of intelligence that are administered in standardized formats and interpreted by qualified practitioners.

**Adaptive Behavior:** means the quality of everyday performance in coping with environmental demand (what children or adults do to take care of themselves and to relate to others in daily living).

**Significant Limitations in Adaptive Functioning:** means an overall composite adaptive functioning limitation that is 2 standard deviations below the mean or adaptive function limitation in two out of three domains at 1.5 standard deviations below the mean as determined from the findings of assessment using comprehensive standardized measure of adaptive behavior interpreted by a qualified practitioner. Domains are independent living, cognitive, and social.

### **Department of Mental Health (DMH)**

Central Office

25 Staniford Street

Boston, MA 02114

Phone: 617-626-8000

TDD: 617-727-9842

Website: [www.dmh.state.ma.us](http://www.dmh.state.ma.us)\*\*\*\*\*

### **Vision and Mission Statement**

The Department of Mental Health, as the State Mental Health Authority, assures and provides access to services and supports to meet the mental health needs of individual of all ages, enabling them to live, work and participate in their communities. The Department establishes standards to ensure effective and culturally competent care to promote recovery. The Department sets policy, promotes self-determination, protects human rights and supports mental health training and research. This critical mission is accomplished by working in partnership with other state agencies, individuals, families, providers and communities.

The Department of Mental Health provides services and supports to adults with serious and persistent mental illness to enable persons to live independently in the community.

### **Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB)**

Janet LaBreck, Commissioner

48 Boylston Street

Boston, MA 02116

Voice: 800-392-6450/617-727-5550

TTY: 800-392-6556

Website: [www.mass.gov/mcb](http://www.mass.gov/mcb)

### **Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH)**

Executive Office

150 Mount Vernon Street, Fifth Floor

Dorchester, MA 02125

## Family involvement

Although a parent's role in their child's life is always one of providing guidance and support, once a student is eighteen they will need to act on their own behalf. Parents can provide support through a mentoring role in which trust and respect are strongly established. It is a balancing act for parents to fade back on support while encouraging self-determination and independence. Unless a parent is the legal guardian of an adult child, the postsecondary education institution will not release any information without the written consent of the student. This includes information from the Disability Services Office at the college.

### Considerations as you prepare your child for college:

- Is your child able to make decisions on their own?
- What will be your child's support system at college?
- If your child takes medication, is he/she able to self-medicate?
- Does your child understand their disability?
- Has your child made the decision to disclose or not disclose their disability?
- Will you child live at home or away from home when attending college?
- What type of postsecondary experience is your child interested in attending (a course, two-year college, four-year college)?
- Will your child need financial aid to attend a postsecondary education experience?
- What types of accommodations will your child need at the postsecondary education level?
- Is your child able to manage their money?

### Resources:

PACER Center

[www.pacer.org](http://www.pacer.org)

National Center on Secondary Education and Transition

[www.ncset.org](http://www.ncset.org)

National Center for the Study of Postsecondary Education Supports

[www.nic.hawaii.edu](http://www.nic.hawaii.edu)

HEATH Resource Center

[www.heath.gwu.edu](http://www.heath.gwu.edu)

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities

[www.nichcy.org](http://www.nichcy.org)

College Parents of America

[www.collegeparents.org](http://www.collegeparents.org)

## **Career Development/Connection to Employment**

While students are in a postsecondary education setting it is important for them to have work related experiences because students may be able to secure work more quickly (Kysar & Pierce, 2000) and it helps confirm the students' career choice, establishes an employment history, and supports students in identifying services they will need in a post-college work situation (Getzel, et al, 2000). In the internship or work environment a student must decide if they will select to disclose their disability to gain accommodation under ADA.

### **References:**

Kysar, D. & Pierce, M. (2000). Does intern/co-op experience translate into career progress and satisfaction? *Journal of Career Planning and Employment*. 60(Z).  
Getzel, E. & Wehman, P. (2005). *Going to College: Expanding Opportunities for People with Disabilities*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes

### **Resources:**

#### **Career Voyages**

Career Voyages provides resources to help individuals find out which occupations are in demand and how to navigate the process to get started.

[www.careervoyages.gov](http://www.careervoyages.gov)

#### **Career Assessments**

Quintessential Careers is a leader in expert career, college and job-search advice.

[www.guintcareers.com](http://www.guintcareers.com)

#### **ISEEK.org**

ISEEK.org provides a wealth of knowledge including information for people with disabilities in the area of education resources, employment resources, financial resources and services specifically with organizations offering health care, advocacy, legal, and other services to people with disabilities.

[www.iseek.org/guide/disabilities/index.html](http://www.iseek.org/guide/disabilities/index.html)

## **Legal**

### **Higher Education Opportunities Act 2008**

The Higher Education Opportunities Act of 2008 is the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and has been authorized through 2014. The Act permits students with certain intellectual disabilities to receive Pell Grants, FSEOG, and Federal Work Study and also establishes a new comprehensive transition program for students with intellectual disabilities.

Programs funded at this time:

Promoting Post baccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans

Master's Degree Programs at historically Black Colleges and Universities

Master's Degree Programs at Predominantly Black Institutions

Source: U.S. Department Education

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/highered/leg/hea08/index.html>

### **Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits "discrimination against a qualified person with a disability because of the disability of such individual in regard to job application procedures, the hiring, advancement, or discharge of employees, employee compensation, job training, and other terms, conditions and privileges of employment" Section 102 (a). Reasonable accommodations must be provided in the workplace for an individual with a disability to perform their job.

### **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is civil rights legislation that prohibits agencies of organizations that receive federal funds from discriminating against qualified individuals solely on the basis of disability. It requires any agency, school or institution receiving federal financial assistance to provide person with disabilities to the greatest extent possible and provide appropriate accommodations.

### **Resources:**

**American Bar Association, Commission on Mental and Physical Disability Law**

<http://www.abanet.org/disability/>

### **Office of Civil Rights**

U.S. Department of Education

1-800-421-3481

[www.ed.gov/ocr](http://www.ed.gov/ocr)

### **National Disabled Students' Union**

40 North East 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Portland, OR 97343

803-524-6029

<http://www.disabledstudents.org>

### **Difference between high school and postsecondary education level**

As students move from the high school to the postsecondary education level there are significant changes in legal rights and entitlement to services. In high school a student's parent(s) have a central voice in the student's Individual Education Program and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ensures a free and appropriate public education for all children with disabilities. At the postsecondary education level the student's voice is the decision maker and it is the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 that prohibits discrimination and provided equal access to include reasonable accommodations. It is the student's responsibility to disclose their disability and provided the appropriate documentation to the postsecondary education institution. Self-identifying is voluntary; however services can only be provided with the appropriate documentation of a disability and must meet the eligibility for such services.

### **Top 10 Differences Between High School and College**

<b>High School</b>	<b>College</b>
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ensures a free and appropriate public education for all children with disabilities.	Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Americans Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits discrimination and provided equal access to include reasonable accommodations
Education is a right.	Education is NOT a right. Student must Attend
Parent has access to student's records and advocates for student.	Student advocates for self.
School district must identify disability.	Student must self-identify.
School district develops an Individual Education Plan.	There is no IEP. Student must identify needs.
School is responsible for arranging for accommodations and modifications.	Student must self-advocate and arrange for accommodations.
Parent advocates for student.	Student advocates for self.
Students need parent's permission to participate in most activities.	Student is an adult and give own permission
School district provides free evaluations.	Student must obtain and pay for their own evaluations.
Teachers often remind you of assignments.	Professors expect you to read the course syllabus and do not remind you of upcoming events.

Go to the Think College website for a complete list of differences:

[www.thinkcollege.net/students/index.php?page=consider](http://www.thinkcollege.net/students/index.php?page=consider)

# Transportation

## Transportation Options

- Own car
- Public transportation
- Carpooling
- Private vendors
- Service Organizations
- Natural supports
- Walk
- Bike

## Resources:

### Association of Travel Instruction

"Association of Travel Instruction (AT!) is committed to the development of competent travel skills for people with disabilities and seniors so they can establish the independence to freely elect to use all modes of public transportation anywhere in the world!"

[www.travelinstruction.org/what is ati.html](http://www.travelinstruction.org/what%20is%20ati.html)

### Driver's Education/support

Adaptive Driving Program 250 Milton Street #LL002

Dedham, MA 02026-2904

Contact: Mark or Tricia Whitehouse Phone: 781-329-6656

### Easter Seals Project ACTION: Route to Freedom

Easter Seals has developed a curriculum of essential lessons for students with disabilities in grades 8-12.

[www.projectaction.org](http://www.projectaction.org)

### Good News Garage

The Good News Garage provides vehicles to purchase at cost significantly below their value (on average \$1,000- \$1,500). Massachusetts residents should contact the Access to Jobs program which is administered by TransAction Associates. Please contact Bobi Høglund at 781-895-1100 for qualification information.

### THE RIDE

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) provides advance notice, shared-ride, door-to-door transportation program for persons with disabilities.

Riding the T-Accessible Services-The RIDE

Phone: 617-973-7000

TTY: 617-973-7306

Website: [www.mbta.com](http://www.mbta.com)

## Community Living Options

As a student moves into a postsecondary education experience the option of independent living should be explored. If a student is interested in housing on-campus, they should contact the housing office for that college as soon as possible because housing is available on a first-come, first-serve basis. To inquire about housing off-campus a student could contact the college for their referral information or check with the local newspaper. A student needing a personal care assistant should develop a list of needs and decide if their needs can be met through the school (assistance in the cafeteria) or if they should hire their own personal care assistant.

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires colleges to provide equal access to individuals with disabilities, including accommodations in housing as well as education. Individual colleges can decide whether or not part-time students or students not formally enrolled (auditing or taking continuing education classes) can live in on campus housing, therefore it is important to apply early.

### Considerations for Dormitory:

- Application- How to apply, what to disclose regarding disability
- Accommodations/Supports- What is the college's policy on providing supports?
- Daily living activities
- PCA-using a personal care assistant
- Laundry
- Meal times, etc.

### Considerations for Off Campus Housing:

- Finding an apartment
- Finding roommates
- Daily living
- Meals
- Laundry
- Paying bills
- Emergencies

### Resources:

#### Health Resource Center

The Health Resource Center is an online clearinghouse on postsecondary education for individual with disabilities.

[www.health.gwu.edu/index.php/200810061057/Modules/Independent-Living.html](http://www.health.gwu.edu/index.php/200810061057/Modules/Independent-Living.html)

#### The Center for an Accessible Society

2980 Beech Street  
San Diego, CA 92102  
619-232-2727

<http://www.accessiblesociety.org>

There is a continuum of living options for student upon graduations, for agencies supports housing to independent living.

**Housing for Individual who have a Mobility or Sensory Disability**

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) provides assistance and services to persons of all ages living with all types of mobility and sensory disabilities to live and work independently.

**MA Rehabilitation Commission**

Phone: 617-204-3600

Website: [www.mass.gov/mrc](http://www.mass.gov/mrc)

**Housing Resources:**

The **Adult Supportive Living Program** provides case coordination services to the individual with a physical disability and an additional secondary disability to assist him or her in managing and organizing various aspects of day-today life.

The **Home Modification Loan Program** is a program established by the legislature to provide loans for access modifications to the primary, permanent residence of elders, adults with disabilities and children with disabilities.

The **Home Care Assistance Program** provides homemaker services to eligible adults with disabilities who are functionally limited in meeting their own nutritional and environmental needs.

The **Mass Access Housing Registry** is a free program that helps people with disabilities find rental housing in Massachusetts, primarily accessible and barrier-free housing.

**Citizens' Housing and Planning Association**

Phone: 617-742-0820 x107

**HomeStart, Inc.**

Phone: 617-542-0338 x230

**JRI Health**

Phone: 617-457-8142-324

**Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership**

Phone: 617-425-6694

**Vinfen**

Phone: 617-441-2390

**Affordable Housing Resources**

Housing Search Guide for People with Disabilities

Website: [www.chapa.org](http://www.chapa.org)

**How to Obtain Housing Assistance in Massachusetts**

Website: [www.mass.gov/dhcd/publications/howto.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dhcd/publications/howto.htm)

**Independent Living Centers** are multi-service agencies for people with disabilities and housing is one of the many services they provide.

Metro west

Phone: 508-875-7853

Website: [www.mwcil.org](http://www.mwcil.org)

Greater Boston

Phone: 617-338-6665

Website: [www.bostoncil.org](http://www.bostoncil.org)

## **Extracurricular Activities/Social Networks**

Participation in extracurricular activities can provide students with the opportunity to develop skills specific to their career path as well as develop non work interests. In addition, students can make friends as well as practice and learn conversation, negotiation, team work, time management and leadership skills.

### **Types of Extracurricular Activities**

- Student Government
- Athletic
- Academic and Professional Organizations
- Volunteer and Service-Related Activities
- Multicultural Activities
- The Arts
- Media
- Social Groups

Please Note:

- There may be specific requirements to join these groups.
- Students and their families should brainstorm accommodations needed as well as transportation needs for participation.

## **Resources**

### **American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD)**

AAPD is the largest national nonprofit cross-disability member organization in the United States.

<http://www.aapd-dc.org>

### **Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSN)**

The Federation is a parent advocacy organization.

113 5 Tremont Street (Suite 420)

Boston, MA 02120

Phone: 617-236-7210

Website: [www.fcsn.org](http://www.fcsn.org)

### **Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE)**

Website: [www.doe.mass.edu/sped/links/transition.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/links/transition.html)

**National Alliance for Secondary Education & Training**

The National Alliance for Secondary Education and Transition (NASET) is a national voluntary coalition of more than 40 organizations and advocacy groups representing special education, general education, career and technical education, youth development, multicultural perspectives and parents.

Website: [www.nasetalliance.org](http://www.nasetalliance.org)

**National Center on Secondary Education and Transition**

Website: [www.ncset.org](http://www.ncset.org)

**National Organization on Disability**

The mission of the National Organization Disability (NOD) is to expand the participation and contribution of America's 54 million men, women and children with disabilities in all aspects of life. By raising disability awareness through programs and information, together we can work toward closing the participation gaps.

Website: [www.nod.org](http://www.nod.org)

**National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center**

The purpose ofNSTTAC is to assist states to build capacity to support and improve transition planning, services, and outcomes for youth with disabilities.

Website: [www.nsttac.org](http://www.nsttac.org)

**PACER Center**

The mission of PACER Center is to expand opportunities and enhance the quality of life of children and young adults with disabilities and their families, based on the concept of parents helping parents.

Website: [www.pacer.org](http://www.pacer.org)

**Partners for Youth with Disabilities, Inc.**

Mentoring programs that assist young people to reach their full potential.

<http://www.pyd.org>

**The George Washington University HEATH Resource Center****HEATH Resource Center**

Online clearing house for postsecondary education for individuals with disabilities

2121 K Street NW, Suite 220

Washington, DC 20037

1-800-544-3284

[www.heath.gwu.edu](http://www.heath.gwu.edu)